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| Permits Committee – Report to BACWA Board | Permits Committee Meeting on: 5/5/15Executive Board Meeting Date: 5/15/15Committee Chair: Meg Herston  |

**Committee Request for Board Action: Discuss Novato permit ammonia reasonable potential with Regional Water Board**

**15 attendees representing 13 BACWA member agencies**

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| **Adoption of Permits/Permit Amendments:** **May –** *Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District (LGVSD)* – At the behest of EPA, LGVSD was given numeric chronic toxicity limits, in addition to triggers in their tentative order. BACWA submitted a [comment letter](http://bacwa.org/Portals/0/Committees/Permit/Library/BACWA%20Comment%20Letter%20to%20RWQCB%20-%20Las%20Gallinas%203-9-15.pdf) which suggested changes in implementation, including how limits are calculated, how reasonable potential is determined, mixing zones, removal of triggers, and removal of acute toxicity limits where no reasonable potential is found. BACWA also suggested that a watershed permit for toxicity may make sense in the San Francisco Bay area. BACWA received a draft response to comments whereby Regional Water Board staff will not implement the changes BACWA requested. EPA sent a comment letter supporting dropping chronic toxicity triggers and acute testing, however, the Regional Water Board feels they cannot remove those provisions because they are required by the Basin Plan. *EBMUD* – The chronic toxicity narrative limit was removed from the TO. The language about blending was removed because of the consent decree. They continue to have a very conservative dilution credit. They receive brine waste from a chlorine generation facility, and the point of compliance is moving downstream of the comingling point, whereas previously it was upstream. **June –** *SFPUC* – No representative was present.*Yountville* – The TO does not contain dates for the dry season prohibition or chronic toxicity testing requirements since they are an intermittent discharger. Their flow is 0.5 mgd. They are given pollutant-specific mixing zones.**July** - *Novato –* Novato removes ammonia, and previously had a WQBEL for ammonia because of high effluent concentrations. However, in this TO, although their effluent ammonia is much lower, they were given reasonable potential for ammonia because “*human waste is a significant source of ammonia and compounds that breakdown into ammonia*”. Their limit is essentially the same as the previous permit. Comments are due June 1. Numeric limits in Region 2 – See Las Gallinas TO, above. In Novato TO, they ran the chronic toxicity data through the TSD, applied dilution and concluded there was no reasonable potential. They also threw out the data from the previous test species that was impacted by pathogen interference. |
| **Dry Season Discharge Prohibitions**Nine shallow water dischargers in the North Bay are prohibited from discharging during the dry season. However, there is inconsistency in how this prohibition is implemented in terms of the dates of the dry season, criteria for exceptions, and methods to obtain approval to discharge. Each agency’s dates are reflective of the circumstances at their facility and recycled water customers’ demand. Lila Tang called a meeting on March 24 to solicit feedback on different alternatives for developing consistency. Lila has [proposed](https://bacwa.box.com/s/ci056pm87s77a40nld1hw5rimc5dpfut) language that does not include dates, but instead requires dischargers to give reasons for their prohibition dates as part of the report of waste discharge. There is some concern that without written authorization agencies won’t have certainty about the allowance of discharges during the dry season, but this seems to be in line with the general Regional Water Board strategy of generally removing language requiring written authorizations for various actions.  |
| **Toxicity**1. *Region 2 Policy -* At the Joint Meeting with Regional Water Board Staff on 5/8, BACWA will approach staff about including a Basin Plan Amendment to remove the triggers and the requirement for acute toxicity limits.
2. *Toxicity data request* - Lorien Fono requested that all agencies send her their toxicity data, as the shallow dischargers already have. She has already received data from several agencies.
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| Approach to dechlorination1. *Sodium bisulfite (SBS) overdosing* – Operators have expressed concern about personal liability if they fail to sufficiently dose with SBS and that leads to a chlorine violation. There is also a risk to operators to go out in wet weather to monitor chlorine residual. The instantaneous maximum of 0.0 mg/L chlorine residual in the Basin Plan is responsible for this precautionary approach. The overuse of SBS cost millions of dollars annually and consumes oxygen in the Bay. There is committee support to approach the Regional Water Board to explore alternative regulatory approaches, perhaps through a Basin Plan Amendment. Getting dilution or credit for die-off in the pipe would reduce the risk of violation. Also, in 2008, the State Water Board found that an ML of 0.3 mg/L was protective.
2. *Peracetic acid -*Several agencies are planning to pilot peracetic acid as an alternative disinfectant. It has the advantage of working instantaneously, i.e., not requiring a significant contact time, and does not produce chlorination byproducts. It may still need to be quenched via SBS. BACWA would like to know what the Regional Water Board would need from a regulatory standpoint to permit its use.
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| **Protocol to truncate list of CTR constituents monitored by RMP**Tom Mumley approached BACWA to ask whether we would accept reduced CTR monitoring in the receiving water. However, Robert Schipf’s opinion is that there isn’t really room for further reduction, since monitoring only happens once every ten years. Some agencies are unhappy about receiving permit limits due to background concentrations of constituents that were measured in the 1990s, since those data are still being used. There was discussion in the committee that it would be worth exploring the possibility of reducing monitoring of constituents by individual agencies and trading this for increased funding to the RMP for monitoring. One limit to reduced monitoring is the pretreatment monitoring requirements in Attachment H, as [amended](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2011/R2-2011-0009.pdf) in 2011.  |
| **Funding for RMP CECs projects**The RMP has minimal funding for their priority CECs projects, which are looking at microbeads, antibiotics and resistance, as well as fipronil and its degradates. They are soliciting voluntary participation and funding from BACWA members for these projects. |
| **Nutrients*** The Nutrient Technical Workgroup meeting was April 22, at SFEI. Dave Senn provided a review of recent data and an update on the science plan, and Martha Sutula discussed the assessment framework. There was discussion about the role of harmful algal blooms and whether that data was being properly vetted. The significance of low DO was also important. Mike pointed out that Martha’s work is leading to unobtainable low numbers (0.2 ug/L DIN), and there is concern that these will translate to enforceable limits.
* Optimization/Upgrade Studies – The site visits have been taking place since April, and agencies are generally happy with how these are going. Facilities with space limitations do not have many options other than membrane treatment for level 3 nutrient reductions, and are concerned about stranded assets if they need to achieve level 2 removals first. (See [HDR presentation](http://bacwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/BACWA-Membership-Meeting-30-Jan-2015-20150109.pdf) for details)
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| **Announcements/Informational Items*** [WEF Nutrient Workshop](http://www.wef.org/Nutrient/) July 26-28
* NACWA Dental Amalgam Task Force – EPA has been listening to objections against making dentists SIUs. The rule is set to be finalized this summer.
* CECs – Ralph Halden is seeking POTW participation in studies. There would be no cost to participants, other than to collect samples. Karin will send information to Lorien to distribute.
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| **2015 Meeting Dates**August meeting will be changed to Aug 4, otherwise all meetings will remain at same date. Lila Tang will attend July, rather than June meeting. |
| **Next BACWA Permits Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, June 9, 2015, at EBMUD Plant Library. |