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Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility



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July 16, 2014

Mr. Walter L. Baker, P. E., Director
Division of Water Quality
195 N. 1950 W.
PO Box 144870
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870

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DWQ-2014-009472

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Subject: Comments on R 317-1-3-3.3 Technology-based Limits for Controlling Nutrient Pollution A. Total Phosphorus Limits

Dear Mr. Baker:

Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility (CVWRF) staff have reviewed the proposed subject rule to require technology-based limits for total phosphorus. We recognize that nutrient pollution in the state's waterways is problematic and phosphorus accumulation can have an ongoing negative impact on certain receiving waters of the state. We also acknowledge the state's ongoing water supply problems as the second driest state in the United States and the Wasatch Front's air quality problems as an EPA non-attainment area. We believe that the proposed rule, as applied to dischargers to Farmington Bay and Great Salt Lake, may be premature. We also find its narrow focus fails to prompt a more integrated approach to overall environmental improvement in Salt Lake County and the State of Utah. The following comments/questions are posed:

1. The State has not yet proven impairment to beneficial uses along the Jordan River, and within the Farmington Bay-Great Salt Lake ecosystems, due to phosphorous loading. Even with the current near record low water volume in Farmington Bay and ongoing phosphorous loading, there is insufficient evidence to declare impairment of its beneficial use at this time. Recognizing the unique relationship of nutrients and the ecosystems of Farmington Bay-Great Salt Lake, the Jordan River/Farmington Bay stakeholders have committed to increase funding of detailed scientific studies to better define nutrient impacts. Money spent on meeting a provisional phosphorous limit may be better spent on studies leading to a more definitive understanding of what nutrient controls are appropriately protective.
2. The proposed rule calls for an annual mean of 1.0 mg/L for total phosphorus. However, the nutrient may have beneficial use if treated effluent were seasonally recycled for irrigation purposes. Sadly, the state legislature and State Engineer's office have limited

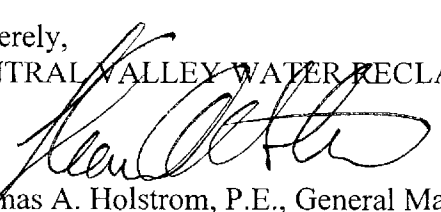
the viability of wastewater recycling projects in Utah by requiring that such project participants hold the underlying water rights, and by limiting their place of use. **When can we expect the Utah Division of Water Quality and State Engineer to cooperatively champion effluent recycling as a means to proactively address both nutrient loading and water supply issues?**

3. The Technical Memorandum entitled *UDWQ POTW Nutrient Removal Cost Impact Study: Analysis of Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility*, completed for UDWQ in June 2010, included as Table 14 an estimate of environmental impacts for the four tiers of nutrient control studied. According to the table, annual removal of approximately 380,000 pounds of phosphorus per year from Central Valley's effluent, under the Tier 2 scenario, will require over 2.95 million pounds of metal salt and 21,000 pounds of polymer. Resulting truck emissions to agriculturally land apply the additional biosolids are projected at over 8.6 million pounds of CO2 per year. Other air emissions and energy use estimates, to produce and deliver the metal salts and polymer, were not provided. In light of UDAQ struggle to abate current levels of PM2.5 precursor pollutants, this will add significantly to that challenge. **Has the Utah Division of Air Quality been made aware of these proposed impacts to the Wasatch Front air shed resulting from the proposed rule?**
4. We note that subsection *C. Exceptions* of the proposed rule does not address the concept of nutrient trading between POTW's along a common receiving water. As you may have heard, Central Valley is exploring the concept of biosolids introduction, from other POTW's, into our digesters for energy recovery and greenhouse gas reduction. Part of the negotiated tip fee equation could include nutrient trading with plants that more readily remove phosphorus than Central Valley does. Inclusion of a nutrient trading concept into the rule would be welcome. **Can nutrient trading be included in the proposed rule?**

Given the foregoing questions, we support the protracted implementation schedule to allow for additional study. Data collection and evaluation continues related to nutrient impacts on the impounded wetlands, Farmington Bay and Great Salt Lake.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on proposed R317-1-3-3.3. We look forward to your response to our questions and to reviewing questions/responses from other interested stakeholders.

Sincerely,
CENTRAL VALLEY WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY


Thomas A. Holstrom, P.E., General Manager

cc. Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility Board
Fred Finlinson, Esq., Board Attorney
Jordan River/Farmington Bay Water Quality Coalition