

Ridgeway, Ivar@Waterboards

From: Villar, Rosie@Waterboards on behalf of WB-RB4-losangeles
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2014 11:45 AM
To: Ridgeway, Ivar@Waterboards
Subject: FW: LA COUNTY MS4 PERMIT - Comments on Marina Del Rey EWMP WP
Attachments: Oxford_hydrology_study_8_4_10.pdf

From: douglaspfay@aol.com [mailto:douglaspfay@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2014 10:35 AM
To: WB-RB4-losangeles
Subject: Fwd: LA COUNTY MS4 PERMIT - Comments on Marina Del Rey EWMP WP

Dear Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and Interested Parties,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EWMP/MS4 Permit process. While my comments are specific to the Marina Del Rey (MDR) area, my concern is the well being of the entire Los Angeles area ecology, especially the end of the line indicator, the Santa Monica Bay. The purpose of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Advisory Committee/Project/Commission/Foundation that has evolved over 30 years is to restore the fishery within the Santa Monica Bay. This has not been accomplished. It is critically important that the LARWQCB take actions through oversight that ensure the mission is accomplished in a timely manner.

Having attended the EWMP forum at the LA Zoo, it was brought to my attention that to be a priority project and qualify for clean water project grant funding, for example Prop 84, components of a project should include recycling, reuse, and aquifer recharge. The proposed and controversial Oxford Basin (OB) Multiuse Enhancement Project (Project) does not include these important components. Removing potentially contaminated sediment while allowing urban runoff and increased tidal exchange from a 303(d) listed impaired waterbody into a sensitive habitat area is not an enhancement.

Submitted to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) was a 2010 OB Hydrology Study (attached dated August 4, 2010). The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (County) letter from Gail Farber to Samuel Unger dated June 26, 2014 is a concern.

The watershed drainage area map in the 8/4/10 study is different than the mapping in the 6/26/14 letter. Why? Most notably is the absence of the City of Los Angeles Thatcher Maintenance Yard from the recent watershed mapping. The 2010 OB Hydrology Study included identifying locations adjacent to the OB where water recycling could occur. Documentation that would support that this important analysis was conducted prior to finalizing the Project has not been procured.

In my opinion, the Thatcher Maintenance Yard is an ideal location for a water recycling facility. It is the only location within this area of the watershed where a facility could be built. It is mostly abandoned and underutilized. Homeless persons have been trespassing and vandalizing the property. A water recycling facility component would meet or exceed the TMDL requirements for MDR.

While the County identifies 2 storm drains that discharge into the OB, they fail to disclose that the proposed Project includes an increase of 1.5 feet of tidal exchange in the Project description. Why? The analysis fails to consider the impacts of introducing a significant increase of daily tidal inflow from the MDR Harbor Basin E, a listed 303(d) impaired waterbody. The OB tide gates and piping will not be limited primarily to outflow, they will be utilized as an inlet. Is this an accurate description?

It is somehow construed that the heavy metals and other impairments found within the OB sediment came from storm drain discharges or are legacy remnants from the former dump/land fill that was within the vicinity of the OB. Absent is any recognition that the impairment source could also be coming from Basin E. Why?

While the watershed serviced by the Boone Olive Pump discharges directly into Basin E, the watershed expanded beyond the original Oxford Avenue Drainage is discharged into the OB to settle, or depending on the rainfall, tide, human judgement and equipment operation, flow directly into Basin E.

Unfortunately, the Project does not include a pump at the tide gates that would allow for discharging into Basin E during a high tide storm event. In this setting flooding of the adjacent neighborhood is imminent and could cause significant levels of urban pollutants to enter the waterways. Should there be alternatives?

Absent from the Land Uses in MDR is that as mitigation for the conversion of the historical Ballona Wetlands to MDR Harbor, a bird refuge was to be built concurrent with the harbor development (a copy of House Document No. 389 will be provided upon request). The Oxford Avenue Drainage was the fresh water supply to the bird refuge identified by the County as the Marina Del Rey Bird Sanctuary in 1962, and dedicated the only Bird Conservation Area (BCA) in Los Angeles County by the Board of Supervisors in 1963. In 1972 the County turned the management of the BCA over to the LACFCD.

A decade ago County leadership made a deal with Goldrich & Kest to develop a 5 story senior living facility on the parking lot adjacent to the OB that was protected to become a public park. Undocumented, part of the deal was to turn the OB into an attractive water feature and recreational park for the future development.

Absent from 5.1 Harbor Based Sources are the materials used in dock construction, demolition and replacement. Copper pipe, wiring, and other materials are submersed in the harbor waters. Materials that find their way to the bottom during maintenance, repairs, and replacement are not recognized in the analysis as a potential and probable pollution source. The County does not have a comprehensive sediment and litter management and removal plan for the MDR harbor. The health and wellbeing of the commercial divers that work in the harbor, and the wildlife, is imperative.

Objects larger than 4" are finding their way into the OB through the MS4 drainage system. Why?

Due to OB Project litigation, the County was required to submit alternative projects to meet the MS4 permit and TMDL requirements by June 28, 2014. Did the County fulfill this requirement?

It would be in the best interest of the residents and wildlife of the MDR area if the LARWQCB took a serious and in depth analysis of the proposed MDR EWMP WP by Implementing Customization. Although it is already recognized that millions of dollars have been spent on studies, the County has proposed to continue wasting millions of dollars on more studies (and lawyers and lobbyists), rather than take the necessary actions to improve the 303(d) impaired water quality of the MDR Harbor that has been under their direct management for 50 years.

The LARWQCB should demand that recycling and reuse be a component of a future OB Project and that given the fact that the OB was planned for and designated a habitat conservation area over 50 years ago, that significant water quality improvements, including fresh potable water in perpetuity for migratory and juvenile birds be a mandatory component of a future project.

While I don't disagree with sediment removal within the OB and MDR Harbor, in fact I have previously submitted a draft work plan to you, I do disagree with the past, current, and future County managements plans that are before the LARWQCB.

The Work Plan should be comprehensive and include the receiving waters.

It's time for action. Action that creates jobs, increases our water supply, and protects our wildlife. Your mission is water quality. For the boaters, visitors, divers, and wildlife, the Marine del Rey Harbor is our aquarium of the Pacific. Aquariums are maintained as needed for optimum health and enjoyment. If you polled persons that recreate in MDR and asked 2 questions:

1. Could you see the bottom?
2. Do you think the water quality could be improved?

I'm confident the majority would answer No and Yes.

That's a No vote for the County's ability to perform competently, and a Yes vote for the LARWQCB to recommend viable solutions to the County's political obfuscations.

Respectfully submitted,

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