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April 10, 2019

Jehiel Cass

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

15095 Amargosa Rd., Bldg 2, Ste 210

Victorville, CA 92392

Dear Mr. Cass,

As you may recall, the Lake Arrowhead Community Services District (LACSD) is assisting with research being conducted by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), and the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) in cooperation with the Arrowhead Lake Association (ALA). Results of the research project will assist water purveyors with drought resiliency by generating a guidance manual to help them determine the feasibility of augmenting surface water with recycled water. The manual will provide guidelines for a consistent approach to surface water augmentation studies that may also assist regulators in their consideration of related permits.

On July 26, 2018, LACSD submitted a waiver request (Attachment A) to the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan) to allow the use of two tracers in Lake Arrowhead to calibrate a three-dimensional hydrodynamic computer model that will simulate dilution and assimilation of a hypothetical recycled water influent under different weather conditions. The two proposed tracers will be Rhodamine WT and sucralose. Lahontan responded with follow-up questions that required additional research and pointed out several needs to improve the administration of the study. Below are Lahontan's questions and follow-up responses.

1. What is the relationship of ALA to the project? Has ALA approved the study and the use of the tracer? Who is considered the discharger?
 - A. ALA is a cooperative party to the study and has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with USBR and LACSD for an Evaluation of Approaches to Determine Mixing and Assimilation of Reuse Effluent (Attachment B). While ALA is allowing access to Lake Arrowhead, the discharger will be UNLV.
2. Who is the responsible party? Who is liable for an unexpected event?
 - A. UNLV is the responsible party. Please see the letter (Attachment C) accepting responsibility for any incident related to the study. A \$1,000,000 insurance policy will be obtained to cover any claims.
3. Has CEQA been considered? Who will be the lead agency?
 - A. CEQA has been fully considered by all of the involved parties, and several CEQA experts have been consulted. While LACSD is supporting the study by providing existing data, LACSD has no discretionary approval authority and is not providing any funding for the tracer dye study. Therefore, the hydrodynamic evaluation would not meet the definition of a project subject to CEQA. LACSD is submitting the waiver request to Lahontan as a courtesy to help facilitate

communication with Lahontan. ALA is a non-profit private organization and UNLV is an out-of-state entity. USBR has conducted their own environmental compliance review (Attachment D) and has determined that the study qualifies for a categorical exclusion as long as UNLV decontaminates their equipment to avoid the transmission of invasive plants or shellfish. It appears that there is simply no CEQA lead agency, since the study is being funded by a federal agency and carried out by an out-of-state university. The experts who have made these conclusions are available to discuss this issue with you directly.

4. Has California Fish and Wildlife been contacted and do they require a permit?
 - A. Heather Elder from California Fish and Wildlife has reviewed the study and has determined that UNLV will not need a permit from her agency. She conveyed that they have no problems with the study as long as Lahontan is aware and does not have any concerns.

We appreciate your patience with us through this process and are grateful for your consideration.

Please let me know if you have further questions. We are all available to meet with you to discuss the study further.

Thank you,



Catherine Cerri
General Manager

Attachments:

- A. Waiver Request dated July 26, 2018
- B. Memorandum of Understanding
- C. UNLV Letter of Liability Acceptance
- D. Categorical Exclusion Checklist

cc: David E. James, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Wayne Austin, General Manager, Arrowhead Lake Association
Meghan Thiemann, United States Bureau of Reclamation
Sergio Alonso, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board