Fact Sheet #8

Watershed-Based Permitting Case Study: Final Permit

Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activity Involving Land Disturbance in the Lake Tahoe Hydrologic Unit El Dorado, Placer and Alpine Counties

NPDES General Permit No. CAG616002 Board Order No. 6-00-03

Watershed
Lake Tahoe Hydrologic Unit

Permitting Authority
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 6a)

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Permit Information
www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb6/files/00-03.pdf

Date Issued
January 12, 2000

Background

- Water quality problems related to storm water discharges, erosion and sedimentation are most frequent and widespread due to significant amount of precipitation in this region.
- Significant resources had been allocated for implementation of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). Most EIP projects are large construction projects for purposes of restoration and improvement of water quality and wildlife habitat.

Permit Type

General permit that covers all storm water discharges to the Lake Tahoe hydrologic unit associated with any construction activity, which includes grading, clearing and excavation (***except*** activities that result in total land disturbance of less than five acres or beginning December 8, 2002 less than one acre and are not part of a common plan of development) or other storm water discharges determined eligible for coverage by the Regional Board and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

Permitting Strategy

- The permit was updated to include specific monitoring and reporting requirements for EIP projects to gauge success and identify strengths and weaknesses of these projects.

Permit Overview

- The permit requires co-permittees to comply with the water quality standards established in the Basin Plan[1] and any amendments.
- All dischargers must develop a SWPPP which outlines all of the pollution prevention measures necessary to reduce pollutants being discharged from the construction site to levels that are in compliance with the effluent limits and receiving water objectives.

[1] Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahonton Region, North and South Basins. Lahonton Regional Control Board. 10/94.

Permit Limits

- Effluent limitations for total nitrogen, total phosphorus, total iron, turbidity, suspended solids and grease/oil.

Parameter	Effluent Limits for Discharge to:	
	Land Treatment Systems	Collection Systems and Surface Waters
Total Nitrogen	5 mg/L (as N)	0.5 mg/L (as N)
Total Phosphorus	1 mg/L (as P)	0.1 mg/L (as P)
Total Iron	4 mg/L	0.5 mg/L
Turbidity	200 NTU	20 NTU
Suspended Solids	—	50 mg/L
Grease and Oil	40 mg/L	2 mg/L

Monitoring Requirements

- All dischargers are required to adhere to the Monitoring and Reporting Program which is included in the general permit. This program details the inspections and reporting required for each permitted site.
- No effluent or ambient monitoring is required by this permit.
- Additional monitoring requirements are included for restoration projects (Attachment C of the permit).
- The permit states that the Regional Board suggests monitoring for amount and type of vegetative cover, stability of stream banks, groundwater levels, success of erosion control measures used on-site and water quality parameters to include total suspended solids, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, conductivity and turbidity.

Special Conditions

- None.

Measures of Success

- Requires additional monitoring to track the success of restoration projects.
- Incorporates storm water effluent limitations developed for the Lake Tahoe Hydrologic Unit.
- Information gained by monitoring of restoration projects identify strengths and weaknesses of projects; this information provides feedback to improve the restoration project and enhance the success of future projects
- Since adoption of the permit, 11 projects have been enrolled.