

S5 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD DATED DECEMBER 30, 2004

S5-1 Comments noted. No response necessary.

S5-2 Comments noted. Refer to responses to comments S5-3 to S5-5, below.

S5-3 The effects of nutrients, salts, coliform bacteria and historic pesticides in the Santa Clara Watershed are described below:

Nutrients: The proposed WRF will be a point source discharge to percolation ponds. The treatment process will include biological nutrient removal (Nitrification/Denitrification) and will produce effluent water quality with less than 10 milligrams (mg)/l Total Nitrogen. The water quality of the water produced by the WRF far exceeds the treated effluent quality from the existing wastewater treatment plant. Therefore, the project is not expected have an adverse effect on nutrient levels in the Santa Clara River watershed.

Salts: The salts (chloride) in the wastewater stream to the WRF will be addressed through source controls. A separate project has been defined to evaluate source control options for salts in the wastewater stream in the City of Santa Paula. This project will include a separate Project Report and associated environmental evaluation under CEQA.

Coliform Bacteria: The proposed WRF will produce effluent for unrestricted use. Consequently, the coliform bacteria criterion of 2.2 mean probable number (MPN) per 100 milliliters (ml) will be met by the project. This is an improvement from the present wastewater treatment facility. Therefore, the proposed project will not result in an adverse impact related to coliform bacteria.

Historic Pesticides: Pesticides are mainly attributed to non-point sources, predominantly runoff from agricultural land. The proposed project will involve the use of approximately 53 acres of land that is presently used for agricultural purposes. The use of the land for the proposed WRF will result in net reductions in the amount of land in this area treated with pesticides. As a result, there would not be an adverse impact to the Santa Clara River watershed with regard to pesticides under the proposed project.

The WRF will involve approximately 53 acres of land; about 12 acres of that will be paved or covered with structures and, therefore, subject to storm water runoff. The proposed project includes an on-site storm water retention basin intended to capture the first flush during a storm event. As a result, there would be no increase off site in polluted runoff generated by the project. Likewise, the majority of the storm water generated on the site would be directed to the adjacent percolation basins; thus there will be no change in natural percolation of storm water percolation due to the project.