

Drought Policy – Options/Alternatives

August 10/11, 2016

Key Elements in Draft Policy Document	Proposed Options/Alternatives	Executive Committee Policy Decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For discharges to groundwater, calculate compliance with applicable narrative/numeric salinity objectives using long-term (10+ year) flow-weighted average while simultaneously considering expected recharge and potential dilution from natural precipitation and streambed percolation to the same basin/sub-basin. Authorize the use of “Offset Projects,” particularly increased stormwater capture and recharge, to demonstrate compliance with WDRs governing salinity discharges. Allow offset credits to be created and banked by constructing and operating such projects or by discharging well below the WDR threshold in non-drought years. Recognize that the credits needed to achieve compliance during periods of drought must be generated at times of above normal precipitation (especially El Niño winters) and, as such, must remain valid for at least 10 years. Consider amending Basin Plans to establish a temporary variance/exception from salinity-related standards during certain drought conditions. variance/exception would be automatically triggered when a drought emergency is declared by an authorized federal or state authority or by some other trigger(s) that have been pre-approved by the Board. At such times, more appropriate interim WDRs or effluent limits would apply. <u>Guidance should be developed</u> to describe both the automatic triggers and the factors that should be considered when developing the alternate, interim WDRs that should apply when trigger conditions occur. Consider amending Basin Plans to establish a temporary variance/exception from salinity-related standards where the TDS concentration in the permitted discharge is significantly better (lower) than the TDS concentration in the receiving water and will improve receiving water quality while promoting maximum use/reuse of available water supplies. Potential impacts to downstream/downgradient water quality must also be evaluated as part of this demonstration. In lieu of authorizing a temporary variance/exception, <u>consider pre-authorizing an automatic allocation of assimilative capacity</u> (where it exists) to accommodate higher TDS concentrations in the discharge/recharge during drought conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate reference to Regional Guidance if it will not be available for evaluation under SNMP CEQA analysis Develop Regional Guidance as soon as possible 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drought policy currently limited to salinity; it is being recommended that it be revised to include Boron 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With regards to pre-authorizing an automatic allocation of assimilative capacity, trigger is needed for each hydrologic region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> San Joaquin River – can use LSRC findings Sacramento River – Board staff looking at an option Tulare Basin – No options identified to date – will need to be developed 	