



Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

August 25, 2023

Via Electronic Mail

Thomas James Moore
Big Basin Water Company, Inc.
16595 Jamison Creek Road
Boulder Creek, CA 95006
Email: sjm16595@gmail.com

Dear Thomas James Moore:

**BIG BASIN WATER COMPANY, INC. – BIG BASIN WOODS SUBDIVISION
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT, HWY 263 AND FALLEN LEAF DRIVE,
BOULDER CREEK, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY – CONDITIONAL APPROVAL TO
ACCEPT FLOWS FROM ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES PURSUANT TO CLEANUP
AND ABATEMENT ORDER NO. R3-2022-0077**

The treatment and disposal of wastewater from the Big Basin Woods Subdivision, located at Hwy 236 and Fallen Leaf Drive, Boulder Creek, Santa Cruz County, is regulated by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board). Big Basin Water Company, Inc. (Big Basin Water Company) is regulated by and is responsible for complying with Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 97-026 (Permit) and Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R3-2023-0037.

On November 21, 2022, the Central Coast Water Board issued Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R3-2022-0077 to Thomas James Moore and Big Basin Water Company (collectively, Dischargers), requiring the Dischargers to address imminent threats to human health and water quality and abate the condition, or threatened condition, of pollution or nuisance by taking necessary remedial actions to prevent the accumulation and discharge of raw sewage. Requirement 2 of Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R3-2022-0077 requires that the Dischargers not accept any additional flows until the wastewater treatment plant is meeting Permit conditions or an alternative plan for the treatment and disposal of wastewater has been approved by the Central Coast Water Board.

Over the past several months, Big Basin Water Company has made necessary repairs to components of the wastewater treatment plant to work towards Permit compliance. On August 2, 2023, after reviewing field sampling data that indicated healthy biological

activity, the Central Coast Water Board issued approval for one additional connection and acknowledged that additional approvals would be dependent on upcoming wastewater treatment plant effluent water quality data and functionality of the disposal system.

Since the August 2, 2023 letter was issued, Big Basin Water Company has reported to the Central Coast Water Board that they have tested and verified functionality of the effluent pipeline and leachfield disposal system and conducted two effluent water quality sampling events. On August 17, 2023, Big Basin Water Company submitted effluent water quality data from samples taken on August 3, 2023, from the wastewater treatment plant. On August 23, 2023, Big Basin Water Company submitted partial effluent water quality data from samples taken on August 10, 2023, from the wastewater treatment plant. The data from these two sampling events show water quality that meets most of the Permit effluent limits.

The Central Coast Water Board finds that the current treatment level and functionality of the disposal system and continued progress towards meeting unmet Permit conditions are acceptable as an alternative plan for treatment and disposal of wastewater for the wastewater treatment plant pursuant to Requirement 2 of Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R3-2022-0077. The Central Coast Water Board therefore approves Big Basin Water Company to accept additional flows from properties, in addition to the properties currently sending wastewater to the wastewater treatment plant, when each property is ready for and seeking temporary or final occupancy permit approval from the County of Santa Cruz. The Dischargers must submit a written statement to the Central Coast Water Board verifying a property's lateral is in good condition and not contributing to inflow and infiltration issues in Big Basin Water Company's sanitary sewer collection system before accepting additional flow from that property.

This approval is conditioned on Big Basin Water Company's continuing to make progress towards achieving Permit compliance. The requirements set forth in Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R3-2022-0077 remain in full force and effect. If Big Basin Water Company fails to properly operate and treat wastewater in compliance with Permit requirements, the Central Coast Water Board retains its authority under the Permit and Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R3-2022-0077 and may prohibit Big Basin Water Company from accepting additional wastewater flows from future connections.

While the Central Coast Water Board is pleased with the progress made at the wastewater treatment plant, it is important to note that there are several items that remain unfinished, which could potentially cause Permit violations. Existing known issues related to inflow and infiltration (e.g., rainwater getting into the system), potential equipment failures, lack of redundancy, and subsequent system performance could all contribute to inadequate wastewater treatment. This conditional approval to accept additional flows may be revoked if there are setbacks to system performance and the treatment system is not treating to Permit standards. To prevent these setbacks, the Central Coast Water Board has expressed to Big Basin Water Company the urgency of completing remaining remedial actions as soon as possible.

It is also important to note that the Permit requirements are from 1997 and are outdated. The wastewater treatment plant will be moved into a new discharge permit over the next year and the facility will need to be able to meet the new permit requirements to remain in compliance.

If you have a questions, please contact Central Coast Water Board staff **Danial Woldearegay** at (805) 549-3892, Danial.Woldearegay@Waterboards.ca.gov, or Mark Lemus at (805) 549-3703, Mark.Lemus@Waterboards.ca.gov, or Jennifer Epp at (805) 594-6181, Jennifer.Epp@Waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

for Matthew T. Keeling
Executive Officer

cc:

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ECM/CIWQS = 147027

GeoTracker No. = WDR100027894

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2020\Enforcement\Emergency CAO\Additional connections