

**SEWER AUTHORITY MID-COASTSIDE**  
Staff Report

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***Subject / Title***

Manager's Informational Report

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***Staff Recommendation:***

None. This is an informational item only.

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***Fiscal Impact:***

None. This is an informational item only.

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***Discussion/Report:***

**Local Agency Formation Commission Meeting, April 16, 2008**

Staff attended the LAFCo meeting of April 16, 2008. A copy of the agenda and handouts are available for review.

**U.S. EPA honors 16 Northern and Central California Environmental Heroes**

During the agency's 10th annual Environmental Awards Ceremony in San Francisco on April 14, 2008 the U.S. EPA presented plaques to 16 organizations and individuals throughout Northern and Central California in recognition of their efforts to protect and preserve the environment in 2007.

This year's winners include SAM's current Board member, John Muller. The EPA recognized John as "a family farmer growing pumpkins and other crops along the coast of Half Moon Bay is implementing sustainable erosion control, water conservation and integrated pest management practices on his 25-acre farm. For example, Muller was the first pumpkin farmer to install drip irrigation. Together with other water conservation practices, he has achieved a 34 percent reduction in water usage. Muller is a leader in promoting sustainable urban agricultural practices in his local community and at the state and national level. This year he talked to thousands of people and conducted over a dozen tours of his farm, explaining the benefits of environmentally-friendly farming to farmers and non-farmers alike. In addition to his community outreach, Muller has provided leadership on issues of water quality, water supply and resource management as a San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board member for 14 years, seven as a board chair, as a Half Moon Bay City Council member, as a member of the U.S. EPA Local Government Advisory Committee and formerly a member of the Coast Side County Water District Board."

Attached are copies of EPA's web pages describing the Award process.

**Below are two excerpts from the RWQCB Executive Officer's report for April 2008:**

**Water Board Takes Steps on Sewage Spills (Lila Tang)**

As part of the lessons learned from the January sewage spills in Marin County, we are well underway in improving our spill response procedures, and have directed part of our permit reissuance staff to investigate those spills, as well as another significant one in Pacifica during that same time. Also, we are improving our sewage spill report tracking system to better meet the public's and the news media's continued interest on this topic. This enhanced system will also allow us to comprehensively assess the problem regionally. The Marin spills have also attracted the attention of Assemblyman Mark Leno, who recently introduced Assembly Bill 2986. His bill proposes to require performance-based grades for all sewage collection and treatment utilities, and proposes to impose requirements on the Regional and State Water Boards to post on the internet various information about the sewage utilities.

Our improved response protocols will provide clearer guidance to direct sewage utilities and other responsible parties to properly notify appropriate agencies and the public of their spills, and as much as possible contain, cleanup, and monitor these spills. Ensuring that responsible parties take appropriate first response actions is extremely important because Board staff cannot respond to all spills.

In terms of improving our sewage spill report tracking system, we plan to re-launch an enhanced version of a web-based reporting system that was developed by Board staff Johnson Lam in 2004, and disabled when a statewide reporting system went online in May 2007. Our enhancement will accommodate spill reports from both sewage collection pipes as well as from wastewater treatment plants. Spills from treatment plants are currently reported in paper form only and not all in one place. One outcome of re-launching our local reporting system would be that it will be necessary for dual reporting by collection agencies to both our system and the statewide system. This will unfortunately have to be the case until we are able to retrieve information from the statewide system in a more timely fashion. Also, our system is more searchable so it will also allow us to more easily assess the regional problem in the future.

For the Marin spills, on February 8, Assistant Executive Officer Dyan Whyte, issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order against the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin (SASM) to cleanup and abate the effects of the spills, report on the circumstances of the spills, and develop and implement a work plan to abate the threat of future spills. We have been in close communication with State Board staff and CalEPA on our follow-up to these spills. We recently sent a completed report of our and State Board staff's preliminary findings to CalEPA. We also provided similar findings in reply to U.S. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey.

In summary, our findings are that both spills were, directly or indirectly, caused by wet weather inflow and infiltration problems from the collection systems of the six communities served by SASM's treatment plant. In the case of the first spill on January 25, there were no operational errors, but SASM did not properly report the spill. In the case of the spill on January 31, flows entering the plant were also elevated due to inflow and infiltration, but operator error appears to be the primary cause of this spill. We are also coordinating with U.S. EPA staff on its continuing investigation into the adequacy of the six satellite collection systems' programs to control inflow

and infiltration. We will continue to work with State Board staff to investigate these spills and determine and take appropriate further enforcement action.

**Safe Disposal of Pharmaceuticals (Heather Ottaway)**

In the upcoming months, the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group (BAPPG), along with other sewage agencies throughout California, will assist the State Board and U.S. EPA in creating a statewide coordinated outreach message regarding pharmaceutical waste disposal. This effort is very timely in the wake of a recent Associated Press (AP) article claiming that pharmaceuticals are present in drinking water supplies throughout the United States. According to the AP, excretion from people who take medication is the major source of these compounds to wastewater treatment plants, and ultimately to drinking water supplies. Most wastewater treatment facilities cannot remove these compounds.

However, the AP article failed to mention the other significant source of pharmaceuticals to wastewater treatment facilities: unused or expired medications disposed of in sinks and toilets. So the statewide outreach will help close the loop on this preventable source.

BAPPG is a consortium of sewage treatment agency staff who have been very active in pollution prevention activities. It has been voluntarily working on pharmaceuticals for a number of years. Currently, BAPPG is trying to overcome regulatory hurdles associated with collecting controlled substances. According to Federal Drug Enforcement Administration rules, collection of controlled substances must be handled by an appropriate law enforcement agency (e.g., sheriff's office, police department). To address this requirement, many cities throughout the Bay Area have established on-going collection programs at local police stations to handle collection of both controlled and uncontrolled substances, while numerous local pharmacies and agencies collect uncontrolled substances. In fact, the Board recognized the County of San Mateo for its innovative program at police stations with an "Honorable Mention" during the 2007 Dr. Teng-chung Wu Pollution Prevention Excellence awards last September. Continued outreach to the public is a critical element of success. BAPPG maintains an up-to-date list of disposal locations throughout the Bay Area on the web at [www.baywise.org](http://www.baywise.org).



## Region 9: News Releases

### **U.S. EPA honors 16 Northern and Central California environmental heroes**

Release date: 04/14/2008

Contact Information: Wendy Chavez, 415/947-4248, [chavez.wendy@epa.gov](mailto:chavez.wendy@epa.gov)

(04/14/08) SAN FRANCISCO -- During the agency's 10th annual Environmental Awards Ceremony in San Francisco today, U.S. EPA Regional Administrator Wayne Nastri presented plaques to 16 organizations and individuals throughout Northern and Central California in recognition of their efforts to protect and preserve the environment in 2007.

"The EPA is pleased and honored to acknowledge the innovative and far-reaching environmental work achieved by this impressive group of organizations and individuals. They set an example for all of us to follow," Nastri said. "All of this year's winners -- in fact, all of this year's nominees -- have made commendable efforts to protect and preserve our air, water and land or increased our awareness of the environmental challenges we face."

The Region 9 Environmental Awards program acknowledges commitment and significant contributions to the environment in California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, Pacific Islands and tribal lands. Twenty nine groups and individuals were selected from over 130 nominees received this year from businesses, local, government officials, tribes, media, environmental organizations and citizen activists.

This year's winners include a family farmer growing pumpkins and other crops along the coast in Half Moon Bay who is a leader in promoting sustainable erosion control, water conservation and integrated pest management at the local, state and national level, engineering students who designed and built a self-sufficient, attractive and affordable solar-powered home, which won 3rd place at an international competition, a "no pigs left behind" program where educational outreach and inspections resulted in reducing 11,000 pounds of nitrogen, 4,000 pounds of phosphorus, and 90 percent of bacterial contamination in nearby waterways, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District that developed an innovative, first-in-the-nation \$3 million climate protection grant program to encourage Bay area local governments and nonprofits to implement projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and an outreach campaign that aims to educate teens about the chemicals in body care products, such as cosmetics, shampoos and lotions;

The Northern California winners and basis for recognition are:

Environmental, Community and Non-Profit

Santa Clara University Solar Decathlon Team  
School of Engineering  
Santa Clara, CA

Reducing dependence on fossil fuels and increasing use of renewable energy is the centerpiece for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Department of Energy recently sponsored a Solar Decathlon, where student teams from all over the world competed to design and build a self-sufficient, attractive and affordable solar-powered home. The Santa Clara University School of Engineering nine-member undergraduate team was one of 20 finalists and took home third place prize. The students' design blurs the boundary of indoor and outdoor space and uses earth-friendly materials, such as bamboo, photovoltaics and a nana wall. The retractable nana wall is eight feet of highly insulated glass that serves as both a wall and a window.

Federal, Tribal, State or Local Government

Keith & Rita Moore  
Pit River Tribe Solid Waste and Recycling  
Burney, CA

Before the Pit River Tribe created its solid waste and recycling program, members of the community had few options for waste disposal. Illegal dumping and open burning were common, but the Pit River Tribe successfully brought waste disposal and recycling collection to tribal homes and businesses. The husband and wife team of Keith and Rita Moore implemented a pay-as-you-throw pick-up service along with a drop-off recycling center. Servicing the tribes over 9,000 acres in seven separate areas is a difficult task, but the duo have been successful implementing the program and gaining support from the tribal council, and increased awareness about solid waste and recycling.

County of Marin  
Marin County Sustainability Program  
San Rafael, CA

The growing concern over global climate change, national dependency on nonrenewable energy sources and a culture that carelessly generates waste, led Marin County to adopt a remarkable sustainability plan. It won a prestigious planning award for its efforts to educate the public about sustainability. The county established development guidelines that consider habitat restoration, regional food sources, green building, energy conservation and affordable housing. They installed solar power in public buildings -- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 550 tons last year. As part of its green building program, the county provided technical assistance to numerous building projects and instituted a green certification program, certifying over 200 businesses. Marin

demonstrates how local government can be effective leaders to ensure a healthy and sustainable future.

San Francisco International Airport  
John L. Martin, director  
San Francisco, CA

With 30 million passengers passing through the San Francisco International Airport each year, the airport faces enormous environmental challenges, yet SFO has an outstanding sustainability program and is a leader in airport waste reduction and recycling. SFO boasts an almost 90 percent diversion rate, including construction and demolition materials. The airport has a source separation program to capture bottles, cans and mixed paper. The airport has an organics program for all of the terminal restaurants and it's phasing out non-recyclable or expanded polystyrene containers in food service areas. SFO is pursuing lighting and HVAC retrofits, and installed more than 50,000 square feet of solar panels. The airport is actively working with its tenants to encourage them to become certified green businesses under San Mateo County's Green Business Program. All of the initiatives can easily be implemented by other airports.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District  
Abby Young  
San Francisco, CA

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District last year developed an innovative, first-in-the-nation climate protection grant program to encourage Bay Area local governments and nonprofits to implement projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The district expended \$3 million in funds to 53 recipients. Three grant categories were established to encourage greenhouse gas reduction strategies across a broad spectrum of programs, including education grants, planning and capacity-building grants and grants to regionalize best practices and innovative approaches. The Bay Area Air Quality District is one of the EPA's critical partners in improving air quality here in the Bay Area.

Cal Climate Action Partnership  
UC Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

The Cal Climate Action Partnership, a grassroots student effort, influenced UC Berkeley to commit substantial university resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The partnership created an emissions inventory for the Berkeley campus, an emissions reduction target, and convinced the UC Berkeley Chancellor to commit investments of close to \$14 million in upfront capital to complete 14 projects designed to meet the emission target. Through the efforts of the CalCAP, UC Berkeley has all 14 of the projects in some stage of development and expects to meet its goal of reducing greenhouse gases back to 1990 levels by the year 2014.

Steven M. Clark

U.S. General Services Administration Pacific Rim Region  
San Francisco, CA

The U.S. General Services Administration is a leader throughout the Pacific Rim region on recycling, composting, energy-efficiency and green power. GSA strives to manage its many governmental assets to promote sustainability and green architectural innovation. Highlights included an energy alternative project at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry in San Diego, which will generate off-grid clean electricity from vehicles at border crossing facilities; the world-renowned sustainable San Francisco Federal Building, which will save taxpayers \$500,000 annually in reduced utility bills; developing a “cool roof” building in Reno, Nev. that conserves 65 percent of energy use compared to a standard building; awarding a ten-year on-site solar power supply contract for the Sacramento federal building, and implementing an aggressive federal building lighting retrofit program with a combined electric energy savings of 2,503,722 kilowatt hours each year.

City of Fresno  
Fresno, CA

The city of Fresno developed a bold and comprehensive vision for its future, planning to achieve city-wide sustainability by the year 2025. The city is tackling multiple problems at one time, developing and implementing programs addressing urban design, renewable energy, business innovation, waste reduction, and the challenging issue of air quality in the San Joaquin Valley. Many of the programs are beginning to show results. The city is also leading by example, greening its facilities and practices, implementing a zero-waste initiative, providing resources, and collaborating with other municipalities and agencies to develop regionally-based green programs.

Doug Treadway, Leta Stagnaro and David Smith  
Ohlone College Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology  
Newark, CA

Abandoned contaminated property blights the community and discourages development. Ohlone College took the initiative to turn a once blighted area into its new Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology. Using an EPA Brownfields grant and funding from bond measures, Ohlone College created a visionary “College of the Future.” Its Newark campus, the first community college in the nation to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Platinum certification, offers courses that include an Environmental Studies Program. The college serves as a role model for its 18,000 students, both teaching and practicing environmental leadership.

Graydon Brown, Jose Lovato, Richard Ruddick and David Edmunds  
Pinoleville Pomo Nation  
Ukiah, CA

Illegal dumping of waste creates a dangerous environment and invites more illegal dumping. When the Pinoleville Pomo Nation discovered dozens of

abandoned trailers accumulating on its land, Graydon Brown, Jose Lovato, Richard Ruddick and David Edmunds devised an innovative solution. Instead of simply removing the trailers to a landfill, the trailers were carefully deconstructed and the materials were reused to build structures that would otherwise be purchased new by the tribe. The Pinoleville Pomo Nation now shares its experience and ideas with other tribes, and has become leaders in the re-use of abandoned trailers.

Individual

Judi Shils  
Teens for Safe Cosmetics  
Ross, CA

Multiple ingredients are used to create personal care products and some may include potentially toxic chemicals. Reaching out to a community that uses many personal care products, Judi Shils educates teens about the chemicals in body care products, such as cosmetics, shampoos and lotions. Teens for Safe Cosmetics is an inspiration to California teens, teaching them to advocate for legislation to provide safer products, and to provide educational materials, workshops and events. The results are so successful in California that Shils is empowering teens in cities across the country to replicate this model.

Captain Charles Moore  
Algalita Marine Research Foundation  
Long Beach, CA

Approximately 3.5 million tons of marine debris float in the Pacific Ocean in an area known as the "great Pacific garbage patch." Captain Charles Moore and the organization he founded, the Algalita Marine Research Foundation, are quantifying and researching the impacts of this body of marine plastics debris -- approximately twice the size of Texas. Capt. Moore documents that the large quantity of plastics block sunlight and prohibits photosynthesis of plankton, the largest food supply for marine animals in the area. While some debris originates from oceanic vessels, 80 percent of the ocean's litter originates on land and travels by current to the area. Moore's research is educating oceanographers and leading to increased public awareness about the quantity and severity of marine debris. His established protocols will minimize the amount of future plastic debris.

John Muller, board chair  
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board  
San Francisco, CA

John Muller, a family farmer growing pumpkins and other crops along the coast of Half Moon Bay, is implementing sustainable erosion control, water conservation and integrated pest management practices on his 25-acre farm. For example, Muller was the first pumpkin farmer to install drip irrigation. Together with other water conservation practices, he has achieved a 34 percent reduction in water usage. Muller is a leader in promoting sustainable urban agricultural

practices in his local community and at the state and national level. This year he talked to thousands of people and conducted over a dozen tours of his farm, explaining the benefits of environmentally-friendly farming to farmers and non-farmers alike. In addition to his community outreach, Muller has provided leadership on issues of water quality, water supply and resource management as a San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board member for 14 years, seven as a board chair, as a Half Moon Bay City Council member, as a member of the U.S. EPA Local Government Advisory Committee and formerly a member of the Coast Side County Water District Board.

Chris Locke  
Locke Ranch, Inc.  
Lockeford, CA

Sustainable agriculture requires farmers to meet the difficult challenge of organic pest control. Chris Locke's ranch, growing 580 acres of walnuts using innovative sustainable farming techniques, sets the example for other walnut growers. The entire walnut acreage uses pheromone-mating disruption to control the codling moth, a predominant pest in walnuts. While codling moth is reduced, beneficial insects are increased, controlling other pests naturally without the need for additional sprays. Chris Locke shares his knowledge with his neighbors and serves as a role model in the community. He plays an integral role in research on pheromone-mating disruption in walnuts, and is recognized as a pioneer in this field.

## Business

Bob Wenzlau and Peter Biffar  
Terradex  
Palo Alto, CA

Terradex's groundbreaking work in communicating environmental information to the public enables individuals and communities to make informed decisions regarding both exposure and contaminant contributions. Terradex's innovative prototype of layering real-time air data on top of the powerful imagery of Google Earth was the inspiration behind the EPA's recent launch of AirNOW layer on Google Earth. This tool provides communities, including sensitive populations and emergency responders, with up-to-the minute air quality information over specific geographic areas. Terradex also created a carbon footprint calculator that enables communities to measure and understand their greenhouse gas contribution. The innovative communication tool informs and inspires individuals to reduce their contribution to global warming.

EcoHaul, Inc.  
Chris Sparks  
Petaluma, CA

Diverting waste to reusable materials not only preserves critical landfill space, but reduces the use of virgin products and the energy needed to manufacture them. EcoHaul of Petaluma is a leader in sustainable business and in supporting

recycling development and education. Founded in 2004 with a pick-up truck and a mission to transform the on-demand waste removal business into a model of environmental responsibility, EcoHaul is now a full-service reuse, donation, recycling, removal and hauling company in the Bay Area. EcoHaul diverts over 85 percent of materials it removes for its customers. In 2007, over 5 million pounds of materials were diverted from landfills. EcoHaul also provides volunteer support for community service and environmental education.

For the complete list of winners, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/region09/awards>