



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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January 31, 2005

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE: **WM-9**

Mr. Jonathon Bishop
Executive Officer
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
320 West 4th Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013-2343

Attention Dr. Xavier Swamikannu

Dear Mr. Bishop:

INTERIM PEAK FLOW RUNOFF CRITERIA FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

For the past year, in accordance with the Development Planning Program and the Special Monitoring Studies of the Los Angeles National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Storm Water Permit, Public Works and the Southern California Storm Water Monitoring Coalition have been conducting a study of the possible impacts on natural streams due to upstream development. A report from the consultant on the work done to date will be forwarded to you under separate cover by the Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project. The Municipal Storm Water Permit requires that each permittee develop and implement numerical criteria for peak flow control in accordance with the findings of the study by February 1, 2005.

However, due to the unexpected hospitalization of a key consultant team member, the study will not be completed in a manner sufficient to develop comprehensive numerical standards. As the result of the latest meeting of the Executive Committee of the Storm Water Monitoring Coalition, the Executive Committee has decided to discuss follow-up options for the research at the next meeting on March 1, 2005.

Therefore, as discussed with Dr. Swamikannu, we are adopting the enclosed Interim Peak Flow Standard to be effective until such time as a final standard can be adopted based on a complete scientific report. Enclosure A is the Interim Standard and Enclosure B, as requested by Dr. Swamikannu, is a comparative table of similar standards in place around the Country. This Interim Standard is derived from the Interim Peak Flow Standard already approved by your Board for the County of Ventura and the Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan provisions of the Los Angeles

Mr. Jonathon Bishop
January 31, 2005
Page 2

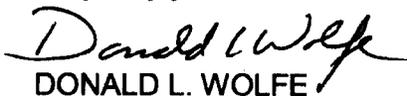
Municipal Storm Water Permit. Because there is only scarce research to support numerical peak flow limits at this time, our intent is to provide protection for natural streams to the extent supported by the study using practical construction practices.

You will note that this Interim Standard will apply to discretionary development projects only. We believe that it will be more effective in the short term for Public Works to impose interim peak flow standards through its discretionary authority for new development. We believe that the discretionary process will capture the majority of all development in unincorporated areas of the County tributary to natural drainage systems. Enclosure C is a list of some major discretionary projects already approved by Public Works, and therefore projects that will not have the Interim Peak Flow Standards imposed upon them.

Finally, as discussed with Dr. Swamikannu, we will participate in the continuation of the peak flow impact study with the other members of the Storm Water Monitoring Coalition. There is approximately \$40,000 of unspent funds remaining from the consultant's incomplete study. Public Works is committed to participating with the Southern California Storm Water Monitoring Coalition in the research necessary to quantify numerical limits associated with peak flow impacts, as will be discussed in the March 1 meeting.

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Dan Lafferty of Watershed Management Division at (626) 458-4325.

Very truly yours,



DONALD L. WOLFE
Acting Director of Public Works

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Enc.

cc: All Permittees
Department of Regional Planning (Lee Stark, Julie Lowry)

ENCLOSURE A

PEAK FLOW STANDARD INTERIM

Objective

The objective of the Peak Flow Standard is to control postdevelopment peak storm water runoff in order to prevent accelerated stream erosion and to protect stream habitat.

Design Storms

The Peak Flow Standard shall require that all postdevelopment runoff from a 2-year, 24-hour storm shall not exceed the predevelopment peak flow rate, burned, from a 2-year, 24-hour storm when the predevelopment peak flow equals or exceeds five cubic feet per second. Discharge flow rates shall be calculated using the County of Los Angeles Modified Rational Method. The Peak Flow Standard shall also require that postdevelopment runoff from the 50-year capital storm shall not exceed the predevelopment peak flow rate, burned and bulked, from the 50-year capital storm.

Natural Drainage Systems

The Peak Flow Standard shall apply only to areas tributary to Natural Drainage Systems in the Malibu Creek, Topanga Canyon Creek, Upper Los Angeles River, Upper San Gabriel River, Santa Clara River, and Los Angeles County coastal stream watersheds.

Floodway Protection

The Peak Flow Standard shall prohibit construction within County-adopted floodways in compliance with Federal Emergency Management Agency Regulations Title 44 CFR, Section 60.3, and County Code Title 11, Chapter 11.60.

Discretionary Priority Projects

The Peak Flow standard shall apply to Discretionary Priority Projects whose applications have not been approved or deemed complete according to County Department of Regional Planning's Development Monitoring System in the following categories only:

- Housing developments (includes single-family homes, multifamily homes, condominiums, and apartments) of 20 units or more;

- A two-acre or more hydraulically connected impervious surface area industrial/commercial development;
- Automotive service facilities (SIC 5013, 5014, 5541, 7532-7534 and 7536-7539) [10,000 square feet or more of surface area];
- Retail gasoline outlets [10,000 square feet or more of surface area and with projected Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 200 or more vehicles]. Subsurface Peak Flow controls that may endanger public safety (i.e., create an explosive environment) are considered not appropriate;
- Restaurants (SIC 5812) [10,000 square feet or more of surface area];
- Parking lots 10,000 square feet or more of surface area or with 50 or more parking spaces;
- Projects located in, adjacent to or discharging directly to an Environmentally Sensitive Area that create 5,000 square feet or more of hydraulically connected impervious surface area and that discharge stormwater and urban runoff that is likely to impact a sensitive biological species or habitat;
- Redevelopment projects in the above categories that meet redevelopment thresholds.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR PEAK FLOW STANDARDS

2-year, 24-hour Storm: a design rainfall event lasting at least 24 hours with a 2-year return period (50 percent probability).

50-year Capital Storm: the 4-day, 50-year return period (2 percent probability) design storm defined in the latest DPW Hydrology and Sedimentation Manual and addenda.

Bulked: the inclusion of inorganic debris in the peak flow rate calculation as the result of a burned watershed, in accordance with the latest DPW Hydrology and Sedimentation Manual and addenda.

Burned: the assumption of a brush fire on a tributary area in the calculation of peak flow rates, in accordance with the latest DPW Hydrology and Sedimentation Manual and addenda.

Discretionary Project: a development project that requires the exercise of judgment or deliberation when the public agency or body decides to approve or disapprove a particular activity, as distinguished from situations where the public agency or body merely has to determine whether there has been conformity with applicable statutes, ordinances, or regulations (Johnson v. State of California, 1968).

Hydraulically connected impervious surface area: within the project boundaries, pavement, roofs, driveways, sidewalks, hardscape, exposed bedrock, anthropogenically compacted and natural hardpan soil, etc., that is impervious to infiltration of storm water and whose flow lines are directly linked to each other during the 2-year, 24-hour storm.

Natural Drainage System: an unlined or unimproved (not engineered) creek, stream, river or similar waterway.

Redevelopment threshold: land-disturbing activity that results in the creation, addition, or replacement of 10,000 square feet or more of hydraulically connected impervious surface area on an already developed site. Redevelopment includes, but is not limited to: the expansion of a building footprint; addition or replacement of a structure; replacement of hydraulically connected impervious surface area that is not part of a routine maintenance activity; and land-disturbing activities related to structural or impervious surfaces. It does not include routine maintenance to maintain original line and grade, hydraulic capacity, or original purpose of facility, nor does it include emergency construction activities required to immediately protect public health and safety.