

USFS STATEWIDE APPROACH ROADMAP

Objective

The existing Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) will be updated. As a second step, a Statewide Conditional Waiver (Statewide Waiver) will be drafted based on the updated WQMP. The Waiver will be considered for adoption by the State Water Board.

Oversight

Oversight for the development of USFS Statewide Approach will be conducted by a Policy Group consisting of the Chair of the State Water Board, the Chairs of the North Coast, Central Valley and Lahontan Water Boards or their designees, and the Deputy Regional Forester of the USFS.

Stakeholders' Committee

A committee of stakeholders will be convened to provide input at key mileposts during the development process. Public workshops will also be convened at the beginning and end of the development process.

Updating the WQMP

A staff working group consisting of State Water Board, USFS and Regional Water Board staff will prepare updates to the WQMP for review by the stakeholders' committee and Policy Group. Per direction from the Policy Group, the revised WQMP may address legacy problem sites, impaired water bodies, monitoring programs, adaptive management, needed future actions, and reporting. In addition, the revised WQMP will include Best Management Practices (BMP) modules for selected activities on USFS lands that may impact water quality (e.g., Timber Harvesting, Forest Roads, Off-Highway Vehicles, Recreation Areas, Grazing). The BMP modules will initially be developed by a team of USFS experts and then reviewed by the staff working group and eventually by the stakeholders' committee and Policy Group. The update of the WQMP is expected to culminate in State Water Board approval by January 2011.

Statewide Conditional Waiver

State Water Board staff will draft a Statewide regulatory mechanism, probably a conditional Waiver, near the end of development of the update of the WQMP (Summer 2010). Consideration of adoption of the Statewide Waiver is targeted for State Water Board approval by January 2011. Meeting this timeframe assumes that the Statewide Waiver will not trigger adverse environmental impacts and that a Negative Declaration will comply with CEQA.