WATER QUALITY PROTECTION DIVISION
WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT - WEEK ENDING 6/27/14

REQUEST FOR DEVIATION TO FUND BRADNER DAM IN LAS VEGAS, NEW MEXICO: On June 24, 2014, members of the R6 SRF and Project Section and representatives from the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water participated in a conference call with the New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA) and the City of Las Vegas, NM regarding the 'Bradner Reservoir Enlargement Project.' 40 CFR Part 35.3520(e)(1) states that 'dams' are ineligible to received funding from the DWSRF program. Therefore, NMFA and the City of Las Vegas are requesting a deviation. A similar request was initiated in August 2012 for the Peterson Raw Water Storage Protect. Yet, the City notified EPA in March 2013 that the underlying geology was not conducive for constructing a new dam at the Peterson Dam location. Accordingly, EPA R6 withdrew the Peterson Dam deviation request. The City is now interested in receiving a deviation for the planning, design and construction of the Bradner Dam water storage project. Both OGWDW and R6 will continue to discuss the eligibility of project, in the hopes of providing an answer back to NMFA and the City by September 2014. **Curry Jones, 665-7130; Maurice Rawls, 665-8049; Ruben Camacho, 665-7599, Javier Ballí, 665-7261**

MEETINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS ON THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE MS4 PERMIT: On July 14th and 15th, Water Quality Protection Division staff will be participating in meetings in Albuquerque with permittees and with a broader group of stakeholders, including the development industry and environmental groups, regarding finalization of the general permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) in the Albuquerque area. These meetings will provide updates on how EPA is addressing major issues raised during the public comment period. Finalization of the permit is scheduled for August. **Brent Larsen, 665-7523**

UPDATE ON HRI AQUIFER EXEMPTION (CHURCH ROCK, SECTION 8): On March 15, 2012, in consultation with the Navajo Nation, the EPA Regional Administrators from Region 6 and 9 agreed to reassess the 1989 exemption granted Hydro Resources Inc. (HRI) to mine uranium in Section 8 near Church Rock, NM. The additional information for the reassessment yielded little data relevant to EPA's current use exemption criteria. None of the new information alters the technical basis for EPA's original approval decision on the HRI aquifer exemption. As a result, the GW/UIC Section is currently preparing a Statement of Basis for our decision and a response letter to the Navajo Nation regarding EPA's reassessment. **Phil Dellinger, 665-8324; Lisa Pham, 665-8326**

PERGAN MARSHALL UPDATE: Starting June 13th Pergan performed the annual falloff and mechanical integrity testing on WDW-243. Region 6 received the falloff test data on June 24th and a UIC Land Ban staff member performed an analysis which indicated the injection reservoir pressure has increased to the level that it is no longer in compliance with the EPA approved no migration petition demonstration. On June 24th Region 6 discussed the results of the WDW-243 radioactive tracer survey with the TCEQ field inspector who witnessed the test and he said that WDW-243 had an exterior channel allowing the waste to leave the no migration petition injection interval. These issued were shared with the Water Quality Protection Division Director on June 24th and he said he would call Region 6 Enforcement and inform them of these issues and a briefing with Enforcement would be arranged. In addition to these issues Pergan confirmed to EPA on June 24th that their Marshall, Texas chemical plant was still operating and that the plant hazardous waste was still being disposed through WDW-243 even though the TCEQ UIC permit expired May 18th. This issue will also be discussed with Region 6 Enforcement. **Ken Johnson, 665-8473; Brian Graves, 665-7193**

SELECT GALVESTON NAVIGATION CHANNELS, GALVESTON OCEAN DREDGED MATERIAL DISPOSAL SITE (ODMDS), AND POSSIBLY THE REFERENCE AREA NOT AFFECTED BY OIL FROM THE TEXAS CITY "Y" OIL SPILL: Lab results from select Galveston navigation channels, Galveston ODMDs, and Reference Area sediments potentially affected by oil from the March 22nd Texas City Y spill in Galveston Bay have been evaluated. It has been determined that sediments from the Galveston Harbor Channel, Galveston Entrance Channel, and Lower Reach of the Houston Ship Channel were not affected by the oil spill and continue to meet the ocean dumping criteria established under the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA). As a result, the Galveston Harbor Channel maintenance dredging is scheduled to begin in July. Results also indicated the Galveston ODMDS sediments were not affected by oil from the spill. However, there is some concern regarding the PAH results at the Reference Area. Confirmatory analyses will be conducted at the Reference Area this fall during the 2014 monitoring survey provided funding is available. **Dr. Jessica Franks, 665-8335**

SAMPLES COLLECTED FROM THE OUACHITA RIVER AND COFFEE CREEK IN CROSSETT, ARKANSAS: Staff from the Monitoring and Assessment (6WQ-EA) section, in collaboration with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff from the Felsenthal and Upper Ouachita Wildlife Refuge, sampled water and sediment from the Ouachita River and Coffee Creek. The Ouachita River receives Georgia Pacific paper mill effluent via Coffee Creek. Samples will be analyzed for toxicity, PAHs, and cadmium. **Laura Hunt, 665-9729**

DRAFT WASTEWATER PERMIT FOR LOUISIANA OFFSHORE OIL PORT (LOOP): EPA R6 and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) continue working on a draft joint reissuance permit the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP). The LOOP - Marine Terminal is located 20 miles south of Grand Isle, Louisiana in the Gulf of Mexico. The deepwater port receives and temporarily stores significant amounts of crude oil from tankers carrying foreign and domestic crude, as well as, domestic crude produced in the Gulf of Mexico. The facility has discharge outfalls into both Federal and State waters which are covered on the joint EPA/LDEQ permit. **Isaac Chen 665-7364**

PROGRAM ACTIVITYMEASURE – PRIORITY PERMITS: As of June 25, 2014, EPA Region 6 in coordination with State agencies issued a total of 12 out of 21 (57%) priority permits. For FY2014, the Region will likely meet the national goal of 100%. The issuance of "priority permits" is a Program Activity Measure (PAM) of the Office of Water National Water Program Guidance, that focuses on the re-issuance of permits that are considered to be environmentally significant. It is also a measure reported under the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) to track the efficiency and effectiveness of the NPDES permitting program. Each fiscal year (since 2005) EPA Regional Offices commit to issue a target number of priority permits. **Kilty Baskin, 665-7500; Paul Kaspar, 665-7459, Syed Shahriyar, 665-2783**

PUEBLO OF ACOMA RETURNS FUNDS: The Pueblo of Acoma has decided to return the funds awarded under its fiscal year 2013 Clean Water Act, Section 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program. The Pueblo received $30,000 in federal funds under this grant, but did not spend any of the funding. Although the grant was not due to expire until September 2014, the tribe was unable to perform any of the work plan activities and did not submit any progress reports. **Curry Jones, 665-6793; Kara Alexander, 665-7312**

PASO DEL NORTE WATERSHED BASED PLAN ACCEPTED: Brian Fontenot of the Watershed Management Section has reviewed and accepted a Watershed Based Plan (WBP) for the Paso del Norte Watershed, part of the Rio Grande in New Mexico. This plan addresses EPA's Nine Key Elements for effective watershed planning. The plan was written by the Paso del Norte Watershed Council and the New Mexico Environmental Department oversaw and funded the development of this plan. The Paso del Norte WBP is designed to address existing water quality impairments for bacteria. Based on the acceptance of this WBP, the State of New Mexico is now eligible for Clean Water Act Section 319 funding for watershed implementation projects consistent with this WBP and New Mexico's Nonpoint Source Management Plan. For further information contact **Brian Fontenot, 665-7286**

NEW MEXICO RELEASES THE UPPER GILA, SAN FRANCISCO, AND MIMBRES WATERSHEDS TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD (TMDL) FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: The New Mexico Environment Department's Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) released the Draft Upper Gila, San Francisco, and Mimbres Watersheds TMDLs for public comment. The 30-day comment period for this document opened June 23, 2014, and closes July 22, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. MDT. The SWQB will hold a public meeting to discuss the draft document on Thursday, July 10, 2014, in Silver City, NM. The draft document includes TMDLs for 8 segments impaired for *E. coli,* turbidity, cadmium, lead, and/or chronic aluminum. In addition, EPA completes review of the second pre-public draft total maximum daily load package that includes 13 TMDLs for E. coli, turbidity, total phosphorous, and total nitrogen covering 8 water segments. With this second package submittal, the SWQB has submitted a total of 25 TMDLs for the year. **Katrina Higgins-Coltrain, 665-8143**

FEDERAL FACILITIES CONFERENCE IN DALLAS: Staff from the WaterSense Program presented, WaterSense: An Essential Element in Your Federal Facility Water Use Reduction Plan, at the Federal Facilities Conference in Dallas on June 25-26, 2014. The Federal Green Challenge is a national effort under EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Program challenging EPA and other federal agencies throughout the country to lead by example in reducing the Federal Government's environmental impact. Water is one of the six target focus areas in the Federal Green Challenge. This conference introduced EPA's 2014 Federal Green Challenge Award Winners, shared the federal green challenge success story and increased awareness on other EPA sustainability programs with the federal facilities communities. **Debora Browning, 665-8025; Julie Hankinson, 665-3185**