

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

ORDER NO. 5R-2011-XXXX

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS

FOR  
VON BARGEN RANCH SEPTAGE DISPOSAL AREA  
GLENN COUNTY

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (hereafter Central Valley Water Board) finds that:

1. On 15 April 2010, Scott and Sandy Von Barga (hereafter, Dischargers) submitted a Application/Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) for Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) to operate a domestic septage disposal facility on the Von Barga Ranch.
2. The Von Barga Ranch Septage Disposal Area is located approximately 2 miles southeast of Artois in Glenn County, at an elevation of 150 feet mean sea level (MSL), in Section 11, T20N, R3W (APN 020-030-021-9).
3. The Von Barga Ranch Septage Disposal Area has been in operation at least since 1975 (and possibly since 1950), receiving domestic septage from Glenn County septage haulers. Historical disposal practices have consisted of lime stabilization to raise the pH to a minimum of 12 for one half hour for pathogen and vector prevention, followed by land application. Effluent is spread by septic trucks, which drive to the south end of the disposal area, where they turn around and open their discharge valve and drive north while the septage is released. Oat crops are planted on half of the land application area each year during the fall, and harvested during the spring to be used as animal feed. The area where septage is land applied is mowed and tilled with a disc about once every other month. The other half of the land that is planted is rotated each year.
4. In a 12 August 1975 letter, the Central Valley Water Board notified the Discharger (Mr. F.C. Von Barga) that submittal of a ROWD was waved on the condition that no nuisance or pollution develops and the county sanitarian regulates disposal at the site.
5. On 26 June 1991, Central Valley Water Board staff inspected the Von Barga Ranch Disposal Site. Based on the inspection, staff concluded that operation of the septage disposal facility is subject to the regulations of Title 23, California Code of Regulations; therefore staff requested submittal of a ROWD.

6. The Discharger (F.C. Von Bargaen) submitted a ROWD on 10 September 1991, however the ROWD was deemed incomplete, and Central Valley Water Board staff requested additional information by 25 November 1991. Central Valley Water Board did not receive the additional requested information.
7. Central Valley Water Board staff inspected the Von Bargaen Ranch Septage Disposal Area on 18 March 2009, following transfer of regulatory oversight to the Redding office of the Central Valley Water Board and again requested a ROWD for continued operation of the septage disposal site.
8. In a 17 March 2010 letter, Central Valley Water Board staff, requested that the Discharger cease operations, stating that continued application of domestic septage to land, prior to adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements, would be considered a violation of the California Water Code.
9. Central Valley Water Board staff received ROWD on 15 April 2010 ROWD and deemed the application complete on 29 April 2010.
10. Approximately 650,000 and 694,000 gallons of septage were received at the Von Bargaen Ranch Septage Disposal facility in 2008 and 2009 respectively. Five septage hauling companies from Glenn County transported waste to the disposal site in 2008 and 2009. The average monthly volume of septage received in 2009 was 58,600 gallons with a maximum monthly volume of 71,500 gallons.

### WASTE CHARACTERIZATION

11. Influent domestic septage received at the facility has not been characterized, however the waste is expected to exhibit similar characteristics of conventional septage parameters.

Parameter	Concentration (mg/L, unless otherwise noted)	
	Minimum	Maximum
Total Solids	1,132	130,475
Total Volatile Solids	353	71,402
Total Suspended Solids	310	93,378
Volatile Suspended Solids	95	51,500
Biological Oxygen Demand	440	78,600
Chemical Oxygen Demand	1,500	703,000
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen	66	1,060
Ammonia Nitrogen	3	116
Total Phosphorus	20	760
Alkalinity	522	4,190

Grease	208	23,368
pH	2	13
Total Coliform	10 <sup>7</sup> /100 mL	10 <sup>9</sup> /100 mL
Fecal Coliform	10 <sup>6</sup> /100 mL	10 <sup>8</sup> /100 mL

Source: U.S. EPA, 1994

12. Soil in the application area is classified as Cortina, a highly permeable gravelly sandy loam. An excavated side slope along the southeast portion of the site exhibits approximately 3 to 5 feet of Cortina soil overlying interbedded channel sand and gravel.
13. Static water level measurements in the on-site irrigations well shows groundwater at 40 feet below ground surface (ft bgs).
14. The average annual precipitation is 17.92 measured at the California Data Exchange Center (CDEC) Willows 6W (WLO) station. The following table describes climate information at the Willows station from 15 October 1906 to 31 December 2009.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (F)	54.5	60.3	65.7	72.9	81.3	89.2	95.2	93.6	89	79.2	65.5	55.4	75.2
Average Min. Temperature (F)	35.9	39	41.3	44.9	51.3	57.6	60.9	58.7	56	49.3	41.1	36.3	47.7
Average Total Precipitation (in.)	3.66	3.18	2.3	1.1	0.65	0.33	0.04	0.09	0.31	0.98	2.13	3.16	17.92

15. The average annual evaporation is approximately 50 to 60 inches according to the California Department of Water Resources Bulletin No. 73-79.
16. Domestic septage contains elements including nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, calcium, magnesium, manganese, boron, copper, zinc, molybdenum, and iron, many of which are beneficial for plant growth. Septage shall be applied in a fashion that correlates to agronomic growth rates for oats and native grasses. According to calculations provided in the ROWD, the maximum volume of domestic septage that may be agronomically applied to land each year is 23,000 gallons/acre (920,000 gallons for 40-acres), based on the amount of nitrogen uptake required by the crop (oats). Currently less than 700,000 gallons of septage is dispersed on the land annually.

17. A groundwater sample was obtained from the on-site agricultural well on 2 April 2010. The well is constructed to 196 feet below ground surface. Results of the analysis show pH at 6.72, electrical conductivity at 0.58 dS/m (580  $\mu$ mhos/cm), chloride at 43.68 mg/L, boron at 0.01 mg/L, sodium absorption ration (SAR) at 1.05, and nitrate as nitrogen at 3.47 mg/L.
18. Soil samples were obtained from the top 12 inches of soil from three locations within the septage disposal area in April 2010. Sodium concentrations in the soil were reported as very low and low in all three samples, and soluble salts were reported as very low. The estimated nitrogen release (ENR) value was reported between 77 and 146 lbs/acre. Phosphorus, potassium, copper, iron, manganese, and zinc, values were reported as high to very high in one or more locations.
19. The nearest domestic well is located approximately 1,900 feet east of the site along County Road 35.
20. The nearest surface water body is Walker Creek approximately 2 miles west of the disposal area. The Glenn-Colusa Canal is located about 2.5 miles southeast of the disposal area.
21. Land use within 1,000 feet of the facility includes intensive agriculture
22. The septage disposal area is not located in a 100-year flood zone as described in the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Map FIRM Community-Panel Number 0600570581B.

### **REGIONALIZATION**

23. Glenn County is approximately 1,300 square miles with a population of 26,950. The County is mostly rural, and regional wastewater management has not been determined to practical.

### **CEQA AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

24. Pursuant to the Glenn County Planning and Public Works Departments (Lead Agency), the Von Bargaen Septage Disposal site is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act based on Title 14, California Code of Regulations Chapter 3, Article 19, Section 15301, Class (1)(b), which states that certain classes of projects do not have a significant effect on the environment, and are categorically exempt from the requirement for the preparation of environmental documents, including, "Existing facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services."

25. The action to adopt WDRs for this facility is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Section 2100, et seq.), in accordance with Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 15301.
26. In a 12 March 2010 letter, Glenn County Planning and Public Works Agency explains, that the Glenn County Unified Development Code regarding land use policy was adopted subsequent to the initiation of the Von Bargen's property use. Glenn County Planning has indicated that a use-permit from the agency is not required.
27. The Discharge is exempt from the requirements in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, pursuant California Code of Regulations, title 27, section 20090, subdivision (b). Data obtained from an on-site agricultural well, shows that groundwater does not appear to be impacted from facility operations and there is no evidence that disposal practices have lead to off-site discharges of waste. This Order requires the Discharger to provide additional evidence, through such means as groundwater monitoring, to ensure continuing compliance with Basin Plan objectives, and that the waste does not need to be managed as hazardous waste.

#### **BASIN PLAN, BENEFICIAL USES, AND WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES**

28. The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins, Fourth Edition*, (hereafter Basin Plan) designates beneficial uses, establishes water quality objectives, contains implementation plans and policies for protecting waters of the basin, and incorporates by reference plans and policies for protecting waters of the basin, and incorporates by reference plans and policies adopted by the State Water Board. Pursuant to Section 13263(a) of the California Water Code, waste discharge requirements must implement the Basin Plan.
29. The beneficial uses of the underlying groundwater are domestic and agricultural supply.
30. The Basin Plan establishes narrative water quality objectives for chemical constituents, tastes and odors, and toxicity in surface water and groundwater.
31. The Basin Plan contains a narrative chemical constituent objective, which is intended to protect all beneficial uses, and is the narrative objective most relevant to protection of agricultural irrigations uses. In general, water sources with an electrical conductivity of 700  $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$  or less are considered to have no impact on any crop. For drinking water supplies, the Basin Plan has adopted state drinking water standards (MCLs) as water quality objectives. Secondary drinking water standards for electrical

conductivity have “recommended” (900 µmhos/cm), “upper” (1600 µmhos/cm), and “short-term” (2200 µmhos/cm) numeric concentrations.

### **ANTIDegradation ANALYSIS**

32. The septage disposal area has existed since at least 1975. Approximately half of the population of Glenn County is served by septic tanks, and almost all septage generated in the county is applied at the Von Bargaen Ranch Septage Disposal Area. There are no other known septage receiving facilities in Glenn County; therefore the Von Bargaen Ranch Septage Disposal Area provides a significant service to the communities in Glenn County.
33. The Discharger has not completed an anti-degradation analysis of the entire treatment facility, however constituents of concern that have the potential to degrade groundwater include salts (primarily EC, sodium, chloride, and nitrate), nutrients, and coliform organisms. Central Valley Water Board staff inspections have not identified a condition of nuisance or pollution of surface water or groundwater as a result of the disposal activities; however the facility has not been monitored on a regular basis during it’s time of operation. This Order requires influent monitoring, site monitoring, and groundwater monitoring. Additional monitoring is required by this Order to determine if the discharge is consistent with the anti-degradation provisions of Resolution 68-16.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

34. All of the above and the supplemental information and details in the attached Information Sheet, which is incorporated by reference herein, were considered in establishing the following conditions of discharge.
35. The Discharger and interested agencies and persons have been notified of the intent to revise waste discharge requirements for this discharge, and they have been provided an opportunity for a public hearing and an opportunity to submit their written views and recommendations.
36. In a public hearing, the Regional Water Board heard and considered all comments pertaining to this facility and discharge.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that, Scott and Sandy Von Bargaen, their agents, successors, and assigns, in order to meet the provisions contained in Division 7 of the California Water Code and regulations adopted thereunder, shall comply with the following:

*[Note: Other prohibitions, conditions, definitions, and some methods of determining compliance are contained in the attached “Standard Provisions and*

*Reporting Requirements for Waste Discharge Requirements” dated 1 March 1991.]*

**A. Discharge Prohibitions**

1. The discharge of wastes from any portion of the septage disposal area to surface waters or surface water drainage courses is prohibited.
2. The discharge of waste classified as ‘hazardous’ under Section 2521, Chapter 15 of Title 23 or ‘designated’, as defined in Section 13173 of the California Water Code is prohibited.
3. The discharge of domestic septage in an area other than at the application area described in the Findings is prohibited.
4. The discharge of municipal solid waste, restaurant and grease trap wastes, car wash pumpings, and other commercial or industrial wastes is prohibited.

**B. Discharge Specifications**

1. The average weekly inflow of domestic septage shall not exceed 17,640 gallons, and the annual discharge shall not exceed 920,000 gallons.
2. Septage shall not be applied to land in amounts which cause the following cumulative loadings or monthly average concentration limits to be exceeded.

Constituent	Cumulative Loadings		Concentration Limits
	kg/hectare	lbs/acre	mg/kg
Arsenic	41	37	75
Cadmium	39	35	85
Chromium*	3,000	2,670	3000
Copper	1,500	1,336	4300
Lead	300	267	840
Mercury	17	15	57
Nickel	420	374	75
Selenium*	100	89	100
Zinc	2,800	2,494	7500

Source: 40 CFR Part 503, Tables 2 & 3, Section 503.13

\*No longer included in Section 503.13

3. Septage shall obtain a pH of greater than 12 for 30 minutes prior to application.

- The discharge of septage shall not exceed the annual application rate calculated using the following equation:

$$AAR = \frac{N}{0.0026}$$

Where:

AAR = Annual application rate in gallons per acre per 356 day period

N = Amount of nitrogen in pounds per acre per 365 day period need by the crop or vegetation grown on the land.

- Public contact with domestic septage shall be precluded or controlled through such means as fences and signs, or acceptable alternatives.
- Objectionable odors originating at the facility shall not be perceivable beyond the limits of the property owned by the Discharger.
- Closure of the septage disposal area shall be approved by the Executive Officer and shall be under the direct supervision of a registered civil engineer or certified engineering geologist.

### C. Groundwater Limitations

- The Discharge shall not cause underlying groundwater to contain waste constituents in concentrations statistically greater than background water quality. For coliform, the Basin Plan objective, for groundwaters used for domestic or municipal supply, is less than 2.2 MPN/100 mL.

### D. Provisions

- The Discharger shall comply with the following task schedule, which includes submittal of a groundwater detection monitoring system work plan, within **3 months of the effective date of this Order**, the The work plan shall include plans for monitoring groundwater in the vicinity of the septage disposal area, including at least one upgradient monitoring location.

Task	Due Date
Submittal of a work plan for a groundwater detection monitoring system	Within <b>3 months</b> of the effective date of this Order
Complete construction of a groundwater monitoring network	Within <b>6 months</b> of the effective date of this Order
Obtain samples from the groundwater	Within <b>9 months</b> of the effective

monitoring network	date of this Order
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2. The Discharger shall comply with the applicable sections of 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 503, *Standards for the Use or Disposal of Sewage Sludge*. These standards establish management criteria for the protection of ground and surface waters, set application and cumulative loading rates for heavy metals, and establish stabilization and disinfection criteria.
3. The Discharger shall comply with the Standard Provisions and Reporting Requirements for Waste Discharge Requirements, dated 1 March 1991, for the domestic wastewater disposal, which are hereby incorporated into this Order
4. The Discharger shall comply with Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R5-2011-XXXX which is attached to and made part of this Order.
5. The Discharger shall maintain legible records of the volume and type of septage discharged and the manner and location of the discharge. Such records shall be maintained at the facility until the beginning of the post-closure maintenance period. These records shall be available for review by representatives of the Regional Board and of the State Water Resources Control Board at anytime during normal business hours.
6. In the event of any change in control or ownership of the septage disposal facility, the Discharger must notify the succeeding owner or operator of the existence of this Order by letter, a copy of which shall be immediately forwarded to this office. To assume operation as Discharger under this Order, the succeeding owner or operator must apply in writing to the Executive Officer requesting transfer of the Order. The request must contain the requesting entity's full legal name, the state of incorporation if a corporation, the name and address and telephone number of the persons responsible for contact with the Regional Water Board, and a statement. The statement shall comply with the signatory paragraph of Standard Provisions B.3 and state that the new owner or operator assumes full responsibility for compliance with this Order. Failure to submit the request shall be considered a discharge without requirements, a violation of the California Water Code. Transfer shall be approved or disapproved by the Executive Officer.

7. A copy of this Order shall be kept at the discharge facility for reference by operating personnel. Key operating personnel shall be familiar with its contents.
8. The Regional Water Board will review this Order periodically and will revise requirements when necessary.

I PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, on      June 2011.

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PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer

KB: Jun-X-2011