



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Regional Board Approves Stringent Discharge Permit for Two Bay Facilities *Shipyard and Navy Base Receive Strengthened Toxicity Standard*

SAN DIEGO, CA – After considerable comment and testimony from San Diego Coastkeeper and Environmental Health Coalition, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board renewed discharge permits for BAE Systems San Diego Ship Repair Inc. and Naval Base Coronado on June 10.

The two facilities require discharge permits for stormwater runoff that enters San Diego Bay. The water can carry heavy metals and other pollutants that cause degradation and toxicity in the Bay. Both approved permits contain new standards for measuring and preventing such toxicity. As EHC's Laura Hunter told the Board, "this runoff threatens water quality for wildlife, fishers, and other recreational users of the Bay."

The new toxicity standard is more protective of water quality and provides a clear definitive test that can be more easily applied and enforced. Environmental groups agreed with EPA officials that the standards are legally sound, technically correct, clearly stated and implementable.

Both dischargers brought up cost issues as a barrier to compliance. However, environmental groups pointed out that low cost measures such as grassy swales – channels

lined with vegetation that allow pollutants to settle and filter out as the water flows over, as well as segregation of high risk flows could be used to address some areas.

“The industrial users of the Bay must be good stewards of our natural resources,” Gabriel Solmer, Legal Director at San Diego Coastkeeper reminded the Board, “There’s nothing more patriotic than clean water.”

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Founded in 1995, San Diego Coastkeeper protects the region’s bays, beaches, watersheds and ocean for the people and wildlife that depend on them. The group balances community outreach, education, and advocacy to promote stewardship of clean water and a healthy coastal ecosystem.

Environmental Health Coalition is one of the oldest and most effective grassroots organizations in the United States, using social change strategies to achieve environmental justice.