PLOO will be diluted to background levels by the time the wastefield approaches any of these protected areas.

3. Endangered or Threatened Species

A 301(h)-modified permit shall not be issued where such issuance would conflict with the federal Endangered Species Act, as amended. This law is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (collectively, the Services).

According to the applicant, 24 listed and candidate species may occur in the vicinity of Point Loma. Operation of the PLOO could affect these species by altering physical, chemical, or biological conditions, including: habitat suitability, water quality, biological integrity, food web dynamics, or the health of organisms. However, long-term monitoring conducted by the City shows no evidence of significant effects from operation of the PLOO on environmental conditions or biological communities. The applicant has reported to the Services that maintaining the existing discharge through the PLOO should not have an adverse impact on listed species or threaten their critical habitat.

By letters dated October 29, 2007, the applicant has requested determinations by the Services that the modified discharge is consistent with the federal Endangered Species Act. The issuance of a 301(h)-modified permit for the Point Loma WTP discharge is contingent upon determinations by the Services.

4. Fishery Conservation and Management

A 301(h)-modified permit shall not be issued where such issuance would conflict with the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended (the MSA).

According to the applicant, the marine environment in the vicinity of Point Loma supports a wide variety of commercial fisheries that are protected and managed through the "Essential Fish Habitat" provisions of the MSA. The fisheries management plans (FMPs) for species that could occur in the Point Loma area are the Pacific Groundfish FMP (83 species), the Coastal Pelagic Species FMP (6 species), and the U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (13 species). According to the applicant, the PLOO could have two types of effects on fisheries: physical impacts associated with the presence of the pipeline and diffusers on the ocean bottom, and biological impacts associated with the discharge of treated wastewater. Based on long-term monitoring results, the applicant has reported to the National Marine Fisheries Service that maintaining the existing discharge through the PLOO should not have an adverse effect on Essential Fish Habitat or Managed Species.

By letter dated October 29, 2007, the applicant has requested a determination by the National Marine Fisheries Service that the modified discharge is consistent with the

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The issuance of a 301(h)-modified permit for the Point Loma WTP discharge is contingent upon the NMFS' determination.

J. State Determination and Concurrence

In accordance with 40 CFR 125.59(i)(2), no 301(h)-modified permit shall be issued until the appropriate State certification/concurrence is granted or waived, or if the State denies certification/concurrence, pursuant to 40 CFR 124.54.

The PLOO discharges beyond the 3 nautical mile State waters limit, into federal waters. Therefore, EPA has primary regulatory responsibility for the discharge. However, in May 1984, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between EPA and the State of California to jointly administer discharges that are granted 301(h) modifications from federal secondary treatment standards. Under California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the Regional Water Boards issue waste discharge requirements which serve as NPDES permits. The joint issuance of a 301(h)-modified NPDES permit for the Point Loma WTP discharge which incorporates both the federal 301(h) variance and State waste discharge requirements will serve as the State's concurrence, pursuant to 40 CFR 124.54.

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APPENDIX A - FIGURES

APPENDIX B - TABLES

APPENDIX C – LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.	Actual and projected annual average and maximum daily/peak hour flows (mgd) for the Point Loma Ocean Outfall from 2001 through 2014.
Table 2.	Initial dilution values for evaluating compliance with applicable State water quality standards and EPA's 304(a)(1) water quality criteria.
Table 3.	Monthly average and annual average influent concentrations for total suspended solids (mg/l) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 4.	Monthly average and annual average effluent concentrations for total suspended solids (mg/l) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 5.	Monthly average and annual average percent removals for total suspended solids (%) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 6.	Monthly average and annual average effluent values for turbidity (NTU) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 7.	Monthly average and annual average effluent values for settleable solids (Ml/l) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 8.	Monthly average and annual average system-wide percent removals for total suspended solids (%).
Table 9.	Point Loma WTP actual and projected flows (mgd) and total suspended solids loadings (MT/year) during the terms of the existing and proposed permits.
Table 10.	Monthly average and annual average influent concentrations for biochemical oxygen demand (mg/l) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 11.	Monthly average and annual average effluent concentrations for biochemical oxygen demand (mg/l) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 12.	Monthly average and annual average percent removals for biochemical oxygen demand (%) at Point Loma WTP.
Table 13.	Monthly average and annual average system-wide percent removals for biochemical oxygen demand (%).
Table 14.	Effluent limits based on CWA sections 301(h) and (j)(5).
Table 15.	Predicted worst-case dissolved oxygen (DO) depressions (mg/l) and percent reductions (%) performed by San Diego (1995) and EPA (1995).
Table 16.	Results of sediment deposition modeling performed by San Diego (1995) and EPA (1995 and 2002).
Table 17.	NOAA sediment quality guidelines, area-weighted means and 95% confidence intervals for mid-shelf (30-120 meters) sediments summarized for the Southern California Bight regional survey in 2003, and the applicant's method detection limits during 2006.
Table 18.	Monthly average and annual average effluent concentrations for total ammonia-nitrogen (mg/l) at Point Loma WTP.

Table 19. BACIP t-test results for six dependent variables around the Point Loma Ocean Outfall. Pre-discharge n=3 and discharge n=13. "*" means significant at alpha = 0.05; "**" means significant at alpha = 0.1; and "ns" means not significant. Table 20. Tolerance intervals and summary data for various benthic indicators at randomly selected San Diego regional stations from 1994 through 2003, based on cluster group F (Attachment E.1 in Volume IV, Appendix E, of the application). Table 21. Applicant's summary for total number of species and total abundance of demersal fishes at trawl zone stations during the pre-discharge (1991-1993) and discharge (1994-2006) periods. Data are expressed as means with ranges in parentheses. Table 22. Applicant's summary for percent abundance of demersal fish species at all trawl zone stations during pre-discharge (1991-1993) and discharge (1994-2006) periods. Data are expressed as the percent of total abundance per trawl. Table 23. Selected U.S. EPA recommended target analyte screening values for recreational fishers. Based on fish consumption rate of 17.5 grams per day, 70 kilograms body weight (all adults), and, for carcinogens, 10⁻⁵ risk level, and 70-year lifetime. Table 24. Selected Fish Contaminant Goals for selected fish contaminants based on cancer and non-cancer risk using an 8 ounce per week (prior to cooking) consumption rate (32 grams per day). Table 25. Bacterial water quality objectives in the California Ocean Plan for State waters designated REC-1. Table 26. 304(a)(1) ambient water quality criteria for bacteria in federal waters where primary contact recreation occurs. Table 27. Commonly detected toxic inorganic and organic constituents in the Point Loma WTP effluent during 2006. Table 28. Summary of significant industrial users (SIUs) in significant noncompliance (SNC) percentage status. Table 29. Effluent limits based on CWA sections 301(h) and (j)(5). Table 30. Point Loma Ocean Outfall flows (mgd) and total suspended solids loadings (MT/yr) projections for long-term facilities planning during the term of the proposed permit and proposed total suspended solids mass emission effluent limits. Table B-1. Long-term average and +1 standard deviation for percent transmissivity (XMS, %) at offshore station water depths, by contour, from October 2003 through October 2007. Table B-2. Long-term average and +1 standard deviation for dissolved oxygen (mg/l) at offshore station water depths, by contour, from October 2003 through October 2007. Table B-3. Long-term average and +1 standard deviation for pH (units) at offshore station water depths, by contour, from October 2003 through October 2007.

Table B-4. Monitored chemical parameters in Point Loma WTP effluent from 2002 through 2006. Table B-4 (cont.). Monitored chemical parameters in Point Loma WTP effluent from 2002 through 2006. Table B-5. Monitored chemical parameters detected at least once in Point Loma WTP effluent from 2002 through 2006. Table B-6. Long-term average and +1 standard deviation for chlorophyll a (mg/l) at offshore station water depths, by contour, from October 2003 through October 2007. Table B-7. Flatfish species sampled for liver tissue (*) at 98 meter trawl fishing zones in October (1995-2006). Table B-8. Rockfish species sampled for muscle tissue (*) at 98 meter rig fishing stations in October (1995-2006). Table B-9. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum bacterial objectives at shoreline stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-9 (cont.) Exceedance summary for single sample maximum bacterial objectives at shoreline stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-10. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean bacterial objectives at shoreline stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-11. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum total coliform objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-12. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum fecal coliform objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-13. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum fecal-total ratio objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-14. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum enterococcus objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-15. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean total coliform objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-16. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean fecal coliform objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-17. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean enterococcus objective at kelp bed stations from June 2003 through July 2007. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum total coliform Table B-18. objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-19. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum fecal coliform objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-20. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum fecal-total ratio objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007.

Table B-21. Exceedance summary for single sample maximum enterococcus objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through Table B-22. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean total coliform objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-23. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean fecal coliform objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007. Table B-24. Exceedance summary for running 30-day geometric mean enterococcus objective at offshore stations in State waters from June 2003 through July 2007. Long term average total coliform density in offshore waters from Table B-25(a). October 2003 through July 2007. Maximum total coliform density in offshore waters from October 2003 Table B-25(b). through July 2007. Long term average fecal coliform density in offshore waters from Table B-26(a). October 2003 through July 2007. Table B-26(b). Maximum fecal coliform density in offshore waters from October 2003 through July 2007. Table B-27(a). Long term average enterococcus density in offshore waters from October 2003 through July 2007. Table B-27(b). Maximum enterococcus density in offshore waters from October 2003 through July 2007. Figure A-1. Map of the San Diego Metropolitan Sewage System service area. Figure A-2. Schematic of the existing Metro System treatment and solids handling facilities. Figure A-3. Map of water quality monitoring station locations in offshore, kelp bed, and shoreline areas. Figure A-4. Map of sediment chemistry and benthic macrofauna monitoring station locations in offshore area. Figure A-5. Long-term average and standard deviation for percent transmissivity at 20, 60, 80, and 100 meter contours (October 2003 through October 2007). Figure A-6. Long-term average and standard deviation for dissolved oxygen concentration at 20, 60, 80, and 100 meter contours (October 2003 through October 2007). Long-term average and standard deviation for pH at 20, 60, 80, and Figure A-7. 100 meter contours (October 2003 through October 2007). Percent total solids in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during Figure A-8. July (1991-2006). Figure A-9. Percent total organic carbon in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006). Figure A-10. Percent total volatile solids in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).

Figure A-11.	Percent total nitrogen in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-12.	Biochemical oxygen demand concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-13.	Total sulfides concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-14.	Arsenic concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-15.	Cadmium concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-16.	Chromium concentrations (mg/kg ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-17.	Copper concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (199-2006).
Figure A-18.	Lead concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-19.	Mercury concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-20.	Nickel concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-21.	Selenium concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-22.	Silver concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-23.	Zinc concentrations (mg/kg or ppm) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-24.	Total DDTs concentrations (ng/kg or ppt) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-25.	Total PAHs concentrations (ug/kg or ppb) in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-26.	Long-term average and standard deviation for chlorophyll a concentrations at 20, 60, 80, and 100 meter contours (October 2003 through October 2007).
Figure A-27.	Average species richness of benthic macrofauna per 0.1 m ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-28.	Average total abundance of benthic macrofauna taxa per 0.1 m ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-29.	Average abundance of <i>Amphiodia</i> spp. per 0.1 m ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-30.	Average abundance of <i>Euphilomedes</i> spp. per 0.1 m ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-31.	Average abundance of <i>Parvilucina tenuisculpta</i> per 0.1 meter ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).
Figure A-32.	Average abundance of <i>Capitella</i> " <i>capitata</i> " (=species complex) per 0.1 m ² in sediment at 98 meter B and E stations during July (1991-2006).

Figure A-33. Map of trawl fishing zones and rig fishing monitoring station locations in offshore area. Figure A-34. Average arsenic concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-35. Average mercury concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-36. Average selenium concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-37. Average hexachlorobenzene concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-38. Average total chlordane concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-39. Average total DDT concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-40. Average total PCB concentrations in flatfish liver at 98 meter trawl fishing zone (TFZ) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-41. Average arsenic concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-42. Average cadmium concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-43. Average chromium concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-44. Average copper concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-45. Average lead concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-46. Average mercury concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-47. Average nickel concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-48. Average selenium concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-49. Average silver concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-50. Average tin concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-51. Average zinc concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-52. Average hexachlorobenzene concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-53. Average total chlordane concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-54. Average total DDT concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006). Figure A-55. Average total PCB concentrations in rockfish muscle at 98 meter rig fishing (RF) stations during October (1995-2006).