

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Permit Streamlining Agreement Approved for Huntington Beach Desalination Project

Huntington Beach, CA – Today, Poseidon Water announced the approval of an agreement among the staffs of the California Coastal Commission (“CCC”), California State Lands Commission (“SLC”) and the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (“Regional Board”) to streamline the permitting process for the Huntington Beach Desalination Project [online link](#).

The Coastal Commission was originally scheduled to consider the Project’s Coastal Development Permit on September 9th; however, Poseidon and Commission staff agreed to defer consideration of the Project’s CDP in order to allow for an interagency agreement that would clearly define the remaining permitting process.

“California continues to suffer from the effects of the worst recorded drought in state history,” said Poseidon Vice President Scott Maloni. “For every year the Project is delayed and not producing water, Orange County will be forced to import, if available, 18 billion gallons of water from the environmentally constrained Sacramento San Joaquin Bay Delta or the Colorado River.

“Consistent with Governor Brown’s directive to ‘help local water agencies reduce the time required to comply with state-required environmental reviews,’ we are grateful to the staffs of the Coastal Commission, Regional Board and State Lands Commission for working with us to follow the most efficient, orderly and timely permitting process for the Huntington Beach Project,” said Maloni.

The Project has already had a lengthy permitting history. The City of Huntington Beach certified an Environmental Impact Report under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) in 2006 and again in 2010. The Regional Board originally approved the Project’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit the in 2006 and again in 2012, and the SLC approved a lease agreement for the Project’s seawater intake and discharge facilities in 2010.

Poseidon is now proposing enhancements to the Project’s seawater intake and discharge technologies that require amendments to the SLC’s and Regional Board’s previous approvals. These design changes were proposed in response to the California State Water Resources Control Board adoption of a new Desalination Amendment to its Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters.

In adopting the Desalination Amendment, the State Water Board resolved to direct its staff to propose and pursue a Memorandum of Agreement with other state agencies including the CCC and SLC to promote interagency collaboration for siting, design, mitigation, and permitting of desalination facilities. The permit sequence framework agreement developed by Poseidon fulfills the intent of the State Water Board’s resolution and creates a roadmap for the appropriate process for permitting seawater desalination facilities in the state of California under the new Desalination Amendment.

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“Poseidon is pleased to once again serve as an industry leader by defining the future of seawater desalination in the state of California,” said Maloni. “Carlsbad was an unprecedented success. As the state’s environmental regulations have now evolved, we are prepared to build on our success and deliver Orange County the most technologically advanced and environmentally sound seawater desalination plant in the world.”

Under the permit sequence agreement, the SLC will consider an amendment to the Project’s 2010 lease agreement and process the required supplemental CEQA analysis of the proposed seawater intake and discharge technology enhancements. The Regional Board will then consider the amendment and renewal of the Project’s 2012 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (“NPDES”) permit and compliance with the State Water Board’s Desalination Amendment. The CCC will then finally consider Poseidon’s application for a Coastal Development Permit, which was first submitted in 2006.

Poseidon anticipates the permitting process to be completed in 2017 and, subject to approval, for the Project to then proceed to the construction phase.

Poseidon’s proposed Huntington Beach Project will be the first large-scale desalination facility in the world to include 1mm (1/25th inch, approximately the thickness of a credit card) slot width seawater intake screens and through-screen water velocity of less than 0.5 feet per second in an open-ocean setting. The plant will also include state-of-the-art diffuser technology that will ensure that the salinity level in the plant’s seawater discharge meets the State Water Board’s stringent new receiving water quality requirements. These technologies will minimize the intake and mortality of all forms of marine life.

The Huntington Beach plant will be the first large-scale water treatment plant in California to be 100% carbon neutral. Poseidon recently submitted a proposed Marine Life Mitigation Plan to the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board that involves providing long-term financial support for the maintenance of the Bolsa Chica.

The Huntington Beach Project will produce 56,000 acre feet per year (50 million gallons per day) of locally controlled, drought-proof drinking water that will reduce Orange County’s need to import water from Northern California and the Colorado River. The Huntington Beach Project is the single largest source of new, local drinking water supply available to the region and is identified in County water planning documents as a planned future water supply. In May 2015, Poseidon and the Orange County Water District reached agreement on the terms for the District to purchase the facility’s full 50 million gallons-per-day capacity.

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Poseidon Water specializes in developing and financing water infrastructure projects, primarily seawater desalination and water treatment plants in an environmentally sensitive manner. These projects are implemented through innovative public-private partnerships in which private enterprise assumes the developmental and financial risks. For more information on Poseidon Water and the Huntington Beach desalination facility, visit <http://HBfreshwater.com>.