Executive Summary

This Annual Report discusses the Permittees' Permit compliance activities for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, the eleventh year of the NPDES Permit No. CAS004002/Order No. 10-108 (Permit). It includes a description of all activities conducted during the reporting period, and the efforts to improve water quality throughout Ventura County by the Permittees. The purpose of this Annual Report is to show compliance with the Permit, and to meet the reporting requirement that an Annual Stormwater Report be submitted by December 15th of each year; in its entirety this Report also serves as the Receiving Water Limitations Report. Since the Permit did not require a Stormwater Management Plan this Annual Report also serves to clarify the Permit's requirements and the efforts put forth by the Permittees to meet them. Finally, program effectiveness assessment of the implementation of the Permit requirements are examined with potential areas for improvement identified.

The Permittees, who contributed the information and data regarding their programs, were instrumental in the preparation of this Annual Report. Cooperating through the Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program (Program) the Permittees ensure information and workloads are shared, economies of scale achieved, and an efficient and effective Program is realized. Together through the implementation of various comprehensive program elements we have strived for improved water quality through compliance with all requirements of the Permit. Each program element has a subcommittee working to develop needed forms, protocols, and procedures to ensure future Permit compliance. The programs, methods, and this Annual Report are continually being refined to improve effectiveness, apply lessons learned, identify and address additional sources of stormwater pollutants, and therefore improve water quality.

Notable accomplishments made by the Permittees and the Program over this reporting period include:

- Continued engagement with Regional Board members and staff during Regional Permit renewal in the hopes of ensuring a Permit that is right for Ventura County, including the submittal of a comprehensive comment package on the Tentative Draft Regional Permit.
- Water quality at beaches throughout Ventura County remained above average for Southern California with seven beaches making the honor roll in Heal the Bay's 2020/21 Annual Beach Report Card (BRC). 98% of the beaches received A grades for summer dry weather, and 92% of beaches received A grades for both winter dry weather and wet weather.
- Participation in SCCWRP's Bight '18 Microbiology Coliphage Study and Trash assessment.
- Completed a countywide regional stormwater treatment project location identification and concept development study.
- Stakeholders are submitting new projects in the Stormwater Resource Plan using a tool developed by the Program that automatically calculates the quantitative and qualitative benefits.
- Continued to inform and engage the highest levels of management about the programmatic and financial impacts of a new Regional Permit through new and refined communication tools.
- The Public Outreach program made over 18.5 million impressions. New creative material was created, in both English and Spanish, focusing on pollutants of concern: trash/litter, pet waste, and yard chemicals. Over 2,000 elementary school age students were educated through COVID-19 safe virtual performances by the EcoHero Show and his engaging and interactive eco-friendly songs.
- Created a more effective and targeted youth outreach program of stormwater pollution prevention informed by the results of the 2019 internet-based youth behavioral awareness survey.

- Continued to grow the new Community for a Clean Watershed public outreach Instagram account: www.instagram.com/cleanwatershed, including the addition of professional high quality local images.

- Coordinated the 2020 Ventura County Coastal Cleanup Day Event, as part of the California Coastal Cleanup Day. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, individual neighborhood self-guided cleanups were encouraged throughout the month of September. 1,046 volunteers reported their cleanup efforts with 6,350 pounds of trash picked up over 147 miles.

- Continued updating the Water Quality Index distilling the over 200 constituents monitored into an easy to communicate form and continued the comprehensive data analysis effort to prioritize pollutants of concern in outfalls and receiving waters that in turn will be used to prioritize Program activities.

- Nine Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plans Annual/Semiannual Reports were submitted to the Regional Board.

- Active participation in the Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC) of Southern California, California Stormwater Quality Association, and the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, including representation as Vice-Chair of SMC, and Co-Chair of CASQA Policy and Permitting subcommittee.

Ventura County continues to be subjected to increased environmental stresses in recent years. Rainfall for 2020/21 was the lowest on historical record for Ventura County. In addition to the ongoing drought, every major watershed within the County has been impacted heavily by numerous wildfires including the Thomas Fire of 2017/18, the Hill and Woolsey fires of 2018/19, and most recently the Maria and Easy fires that occurred in 2019. The impacts of the fires were not observed in the water quality monitoring results, as concentrations above applicable water quality objectives (WQO) were similar to non-fire years, although higher sediment loads were observed in the runoff.

Three wet weather events were sampled at each of the fourteen monitoring stations. Ten of fourteen stations were sampled during dry weather and it can be inferred no pollutants were being discharged at the dry/unsampled stations. Aquatic toxicity samples were analyzed for all fourteen sites during the first sampled wet event of the monitoring year and no toxicity was observed. Biological assessments were performed in accordance with the new 2021-2025 Bioassessment Workplan, and at the Principal Permittee's fixed (Integrator) sites at the three receiving water stations.

The Water Quality Index (Index) shows generally good water quality scores across the County, with the overall Index showing A to C grades at mass emission stations during 2020/21 in both wet and dry weather. Bacteria (E. coli) and/or salts concentrations continued to be the main contributor(s) at sites with lower overall scores for both wet and dry weather, although E. coli could not be sampled at all events due to COVID-19 pandemic related issues at the laboratory. Other constituents that were found at elevated levels in relation to applicable water quality objectives (WQO) at least once during wet-weather events include total chlorine residual, chloride, total dissolved solids, total cyanide, total aluminum, nitrate + nitrite as nitrogen, benzo(a)pyrene, bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate, and pentachlorophenol. Constituents not meeting dry-weather WQO at least once include pH, dissolved oxygen, chloride, total dissolved solids, and total selenium. Data from the Stormwater Monitoring Program (SMP) is used to identify pollutants of concern and direct efforts to reduce their discharge from the storm drain system.

Continued in this Annual Report are the Performance Standards for specific Permit requirements identified in each section along with the Permittees' status on achieving that standard. Permit compliance cannot be directly inferred solely by these Performance Standards as the complete effort of the Permittees cannot be reflected through these discrete metrics. Rather, the information is more suitable for use by the Permittees to gage their efforts and identify areas of needed improvement.