



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region



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October 14, 2010

Interested Parties and Stakeholders

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE LAHONTAN REGION: LAKE TAHOE TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD (TMDL)

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) is proposing to amend the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) by incorporating the Lake Tahoe TMDL and changing portions of the Basin Plan to be consistent with recent scientific information and the Lake Tahoe TMDL.

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) is proposing to amend the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) by incorporating the Lake Tahoe TMDL and changing portions of the Basin Plan to be consistent with recent scientific information and the Lake Tahoe TMDL. The following items describe the proposed Basin Plan amendments.

The Lake Tahoe TMDL describes a restoration plan to halt Lake Tahoe's transparency decline and restore transparency to meet the established standard. The proposed changes to current Basin Plan language are described in Enclosure 1: *Proposed Water Quality Control Plan Amendment – Total Maximum Daily Load for Sediment and Nutrients in Lake Tahoe (October 2010)*. Enclosure 2 provides a comprehensive version of the proposed amendments that highlights the differences between the July 2010 draft and the October 2010 draft.

Water Board staff have summarized the proposed changes in the following two sections, (A) proposed changes to current Basin Plan language, and (B) proposed changes to the July 2010 draft:

A. Proposed changes to current Basin Plan language

Lake Tahoe TMDL: Water Board staff propose to add sub-section 5-18 to Basin Plan Chapter 5 - *Water Quality Standards and Control Measures for the Lake Tahoe Basin*. The new Lake Tahoe TMDL section includes an overview of the TMDL research findings, a detailed synopsis of the TMDL implementation plan, and pollutant load allocation tables.

Pollutants of Concern: Current Basin Plan text emphasizes the role of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) in Lake Tahoe's transparency decline. The proposed amendment adds reference to fine sediment particles less than 16 micrometers in all discussions of water quality impairment and pollutant reduction efforts to highlight the role of this pollutant in transparency loss. Amendment language emphasizes fine sediment particles as a discreet pollutant independent of nutrients while maintaining existing references to nitrogen and phosphorus as pollutants affecting Lake Tahoe's transparency.

Replace the 20-year Compliance Date ending in 2007 with the TMDL

Implementation Plan Timeline: The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) developed the Water Quality Management Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin (208 Plan) which was amended in 1988. In numerous instances, the current Basin Plan references the 208 Plan and the associated 20-year compliance date ending in 2007 for implementing water quality control measures in the Tahoe watershed.

The proposed Basin Plan amendment will remove references to the 208 Plan compliance schedule and replace it with references to the Lake Tahoe TMDL Implementation Plan timeline.

Describe Stormwater Treatment Requirements: The Lake Tahoe TMDL identifies urban stormwater runoff as the largest source of fine sediment particles and phosphorus and the TMDL implementation plan emphasizes actions to reduce pollutant loading from urban runoff.

The proposed amendments maintain an emphasis on infiltrating all urban stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable while acknowledging the realities of physical site constraints and the need to prioritize load reduction actions to make the best use of public resources to control roadway runoff.

The Lake Tahoe TMDL establishes fine sediment particle, total phosphorus, and total nitrogen load reduction requirements for the City of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County, Placer County, and the California Department of Transportation. The Lake Tahoe TMDL provides these agencies the flexibility to individually prioritize load reduction actions and to consider a variety of design storms for planning sub-watershed or catchment scale activities and projects to collectively achieve the load reduction requirements. The proposed Basin Plan amendment describes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permits and associated Storm Water Management Plans as the primary regulatory mechanism to ensure that required pollutant load reductions from urban stormwater discharges are achieved. For new development, redevelopment, and parcel-scale Best Management Practice projects, the proposed amendment requires project proponents to infiltrate stormwater runoff generated by the 20 year, 1-hour design storm when site conditions permit. Amendment language encourages infiltration and treatment of volumes in excess of the 20 year, 1-hour storm volume. In areas where site constraints limit infiltration opportunities, the proposed amendment will require treatment of the 20 year, 1-hour design storm to meet numeric effluent limits for turbidity, total nitrogen, and total phosphorus.

Eliminate Reference to Alternative Deicer Studies: Basin Plan Chapter 4.8 currently includes an out-dated discussion describing alternative products for reducing ice buildup on roadways. The proposed amendment will delete this language because the studies referenced are complete and inconclusive. The Lake Tahoe TMDL implementation plan accounts for pollutants generated by the application of abrasives and associated control measures, therefore municipal jurisdictions and the California Department of Transportation have an incentive to consider alternative deicers and traction abrasive materials as part of jurisdiction-wide Storm Water Management Plan efforts to reduce pollutant loads as required by the Lake Tahoe TMDL.

Replace Capital Improvement Plan References with Environmental Improvement Plan: Basin Plan Chapter 5 describes the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that was created to implement the requirements of the 208 Plan. The CIP listed proposed projects believed necessary to improve water quality in the Lake Tahoe basin. Many of the projects have been built, and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has replaced the CIP project list with the program-focused Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). This amendment updates the Basin Plan to delete language and tables describing the CIP. Where appropriate, the amendment language references the EIP as the relevant program influencing restoration efforts.

B. Proposed Changes to the July 2010 Basin Plan Amendment Draft

The Water Board circulated draft Basin Plan amendments (dated July 2010) prior its September 8, 2008 meeting. The proposed amendments have been significantly changed from the July 2010 draft. The changes from the July 2010 draft to the October 2010 draft are shown in **colored text and are shaded a pale gray color**. As Water Board staff indicated during the September 8, 2010, Water Board meeting, the current amendment does not propose to eliminate numeric stormwater effluent limits for discharges to infiltration systems, nor does it propose to eliminate Total Iron and Grease and Oil from the numeric stormwater effluent limits for surface water discharges.

Water Board staff have added a section in the TMDL describing the Daily Loading analysis and associated flow-weighted daily load values for hydraulic inputs to the lake.

The Margin of Safety and Future Growth potential sections in the TMDL have been edited in response to stakeholder comments.


The Implementation Plan has been modified to better describe required actions to address forest upland loading and responsibilities of different agencies. The Schedule of TMDL Attainment, Data Review, and Revision has been adjusted to describe the anticipated 65 year TMDL implementation period and explain how the estimated timeframe was developed. A discussion of global climate change was added to the Adaptive Management section, and the Monitoring Plan has been significantly revised to add more detail regarding anticipated monitoring actions for each pollutant source and ongoing monitoring of the lake and tributaries.

Finally, certain portions of the underline/strikeout table of the proposed Basin Plan amendment have been edited in response to comments. Most adjustments consist of

minor word changes. An added paragraph is proposed to page 5-2 of the Basin Plan to describe the Water Board's commitment to addressing nearshore water quality issues. The Stormwater Treatment section (5.6-1) has been revised to eliminate redundancy and clarify which treatment requirements apply to different dischargers.

Enclosure 3 is a proposed resolution that Water Board staff will present to the Water Board to consider adoption at the Board meeting scheduled for November 16, 2010, in South Lake Tahoe.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me by phone at 530-542-5453 or at dfsmith@waterboards.ca.gov.



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- Enclosures:
1. Proposed Water Quality Control Plan Amendments – Total Maximum Daily Load for Sediment and Nutrients in Lake Tahoe (October 2010)
 2. Proposed Water Quality Control Plan Amendments – Comparison between July 2010 draft and October 2010 draft
 3. Resolution R6T-2010-PROPOSED