

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S SUMMARY REPORT  
8:30 a.m., September 29, 2011  
Regional Water Board Office  
David C. Joseph Hearing Room  
5550 Skylane Blvd, Suite A  
Santa Rosa, CA

Item: 9

Subject: Mad River Watershed Assessment and TMDL Compliance

### **Background**

The Mad River watershed covers approximately 504 square miles in Trinity and Humboldt Counties. The Mad River supports 18 of the 29 beneficial uses as defined by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). This watershed was first listed on the Clean Water Act 303(d) List of Impaired Waterbodies by United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) in 1992 for sediment and turbidity, and was listed as impaired for temperature in 2002. In 2007 the US EPA established total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for the Mad River addressing the sediment and turbidity impairments. Also in 2007 the Regional Water Board adopted the *Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Policy Statement for Sediment Impaired Receiving Waters in the North Coast Region*, and subsequently staff developed the supporting Work Plan to Control Excess Sediment in Sediment Impaired Watersheds (Workplan). While the Mad River is addressed in the Work Plan, the plan is general in its approach and is non-prescriptive.

On August 6, 2007 the State Water Board awarded the Redwood Community Action Agency a grant to assist landowners with TMDL compliance in the Mad River watershed. The scope of the grant included: 1) conducting a watershed assessment to further understand the natural background and management-related sediment sources in the watershed; 2) identifying what land use activities are most responsible for generating management-related sediment discharges; 3) assessing the impacts of those sediments on water quality standards; and 4) developing a TMDL compliance plan. **Attachment 1** provides a project overview of the Mad River Watershed Assessment and TMDL Compliance Plan.

The objective of the TMDL Compliance Plan is to reduce sediment inputs from nine categories of land uses, including roads, construction, forestry, mining, grazing, and agriculture among others. The plan provides sediment source control and management activities specifically aimed at controlling these sediment sources in the Mad River. The TMDL Compliance Plan was developed with critical input from landowner working groups, who have a strong interest in receiving regulatory certainty regarding TMDL compliance in implementing the Plan.

This item will be presented at the Regional Water Board meeting as an information item by Craig Benson, Watershed Program Manager of the Redwood Community Action Agency. On behalf of the Mad River landowner working groups, Mr. Benson is seeking Regional Water Board input on a regulatory framework and mechanism for TMDL compliance in the Mad River watershed.

PRELIMINARY STAFF  
RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational item.