

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Mike Napolitano)  
MEETING DATE: June 11, 2014

**ITEM:** 6

**SUBJECT:** **Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the San Francisco Bay Region to Establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Fine Sediment in the Lagunitas Creek Watershed and an Implementation Plan to Achieve the TMDL and Related Habitat Enhancement Goals—Hearing to Consider Adoption of Proposed Basin Plan amendment**

**CHRONOLOGY:** There has been no previous action by the Board on this matter.

**DISCUSSION:** The attached Revised Tentative Resolution (Appendix A) would amend the Basin Plan to incorporate a TMDL and implementation plan to control delivery of fine sediment and enhance habitat in the Lagunitas Creek watershed.

Lagunitas Creek is located in Marin County and drains to Tomales Bay. It provides essential habitat for federally-listed endangered coho salmon, steelhead trout, and California freshwater shrimp, and it notably supports the most significant population of coho salmon south of Mendocino County. Besides loss of habitat due to dams, the most significant cause for coho salmon and steelhead population declines is channel incision. Channel incision reduces the frequency of gravel bars and pools, side channels, and alcoves, and results in disconnection of the channel from its floodplain. The Basin Plan amendment (Appendix B) is proposed in order to restore properly functioning conditions with regard to streambed substrate and stream-riparian habitat complexity and connectivity in the Lagunitas Creek watershed and reduce sediment delivery to channels resulting from road-related erosion. It establishes:

- A sediment TMDL at less than or equal to 120 percent of the natural background sediment load;
- Numeric targets for sediment, expressed as streambed mobility and redd scour targets;
- Numeric targets for habitat condition, expressed as the amount of large woody debris in channels;
- Allocations for all significant sediment source categories;
- An implementation plan to achieve the TMDL and related habitat enhancement goals; and
- A plan and schedule to evaluate and monitor progress towards meeting the targets.

The Staff Report (Appendix C) provides the scientific basis for the proposed Basin Plan amendment as well as regulatory analyses of potential environmental effects.

*Public Outreach:* During the public comment period, we convened a town hall meeting in the San Geronimo Valley and, in partnership with the Lagunitas Technical

Advisory Committee, participated in a special meeting to discuss the scientific basis of the TMDL and the Habitat Enhancement Plan.

*Comments from Stakeholders and Staff Responses:* Three parties submitted written comments during the 45-day public comment period: the Marin County Department of Public Works (County); the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD), and a San Geronimo Valley resident, Dennis Poggio. Staff considered and responded to the comment letters received as discussed in the Response to Comments (Appendix D). Copies of all written comments received during the public comment period are included as Appendix E. All commenters expressed appreciation for the technical studies and the scientific foundation of the work.

The County asked that the Board reconsider the timeline included in the amendment for addressing sediment delivery from paved roads under their jurisdiction. It identifies actions it is already taking in the watershed and expresses concern about the cost and lack of funds available to complete the potential management actions necessary to reduce potential sediment delivery. We did not make any changes in response to this concern and assert that it is reasonable to expect the County to complete an erosion inventory of its paved roads in a 5-year timeframe as other public agencies having responsibility for roads in Marin County have already completed the required inventories. The TMDL implementation plan allows a 20-year timeframe for completion of any paved road-related repairs, which is the same timeframe provided for other road-related actions.

We made a number of clarifying changes to the Basin Plan amendment and Staff Report based on comments from MMWD and Mr. Poggio. MMWD also expressed concerns about the feasibility and potential impacts of reconnecting Lower Lagunitas Creek to its floodplain. We responded by clarifying that we are only calling for planning level analyses of the feasibility of these actions.

**RECOMMEN-  
DATION:**

Adoption of the Revised Tentative Resolution

**APPENDICES:**

- A. Revised Tentative Resolution with Basin Plan Amendment (Exhibit A)
- B. Revised Proposed Basin Plan Amendment showing changes since March 10, 2014
- C. Staff Report – Available electronically at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water\\_issues/programs/TMDLs/lagunitascrksedimenttmdl.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/lagunitascrksedimenttmdl.shtml)
- D. Responses to comments
- E. Written comments received -Available electronically at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water\\_issues/programs/TMDLs/lagunitascrksedimenttmdl.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/lagunitascrksedimenttmdl.shtml)