

**CEQA Scoping Meeting  
Proposed Amendment to the Basin Plan  
Changing the Nitrate Water Quality Objective  
for 44 Groundwater Basins**

**Fisayo Osibodu**

**San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board**

**July 31, 2014**



# Presentation Outline

- Background
- Project Description Under CEQA
- Rationale for Proposed Change to WQO
- Description of Required CEQA Document
- Overview of Draft Environmental Checklist
- Overview of Basin Plan Amendment Process



# Functions of the Basin Plan

Adopted Regulatory Document which:

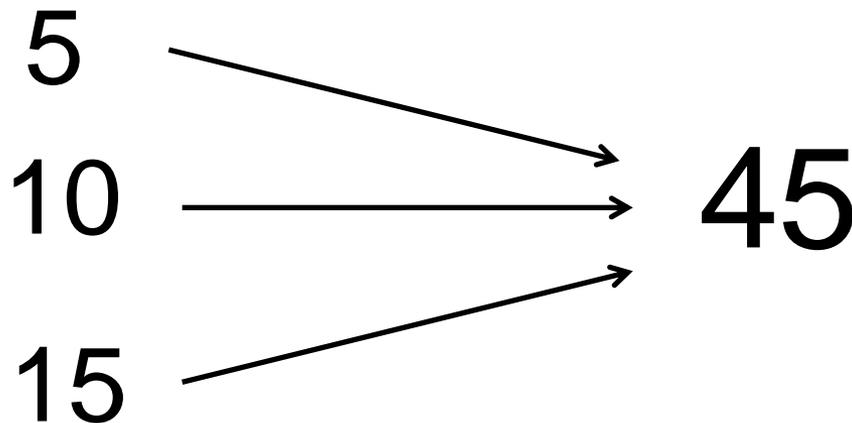
- Designates beneficial uses
- Sets narrative and numerical wqo
- Describes implementation programs
- Describes surveillance and monitoring activities
- Incorporates applicable plans and policies

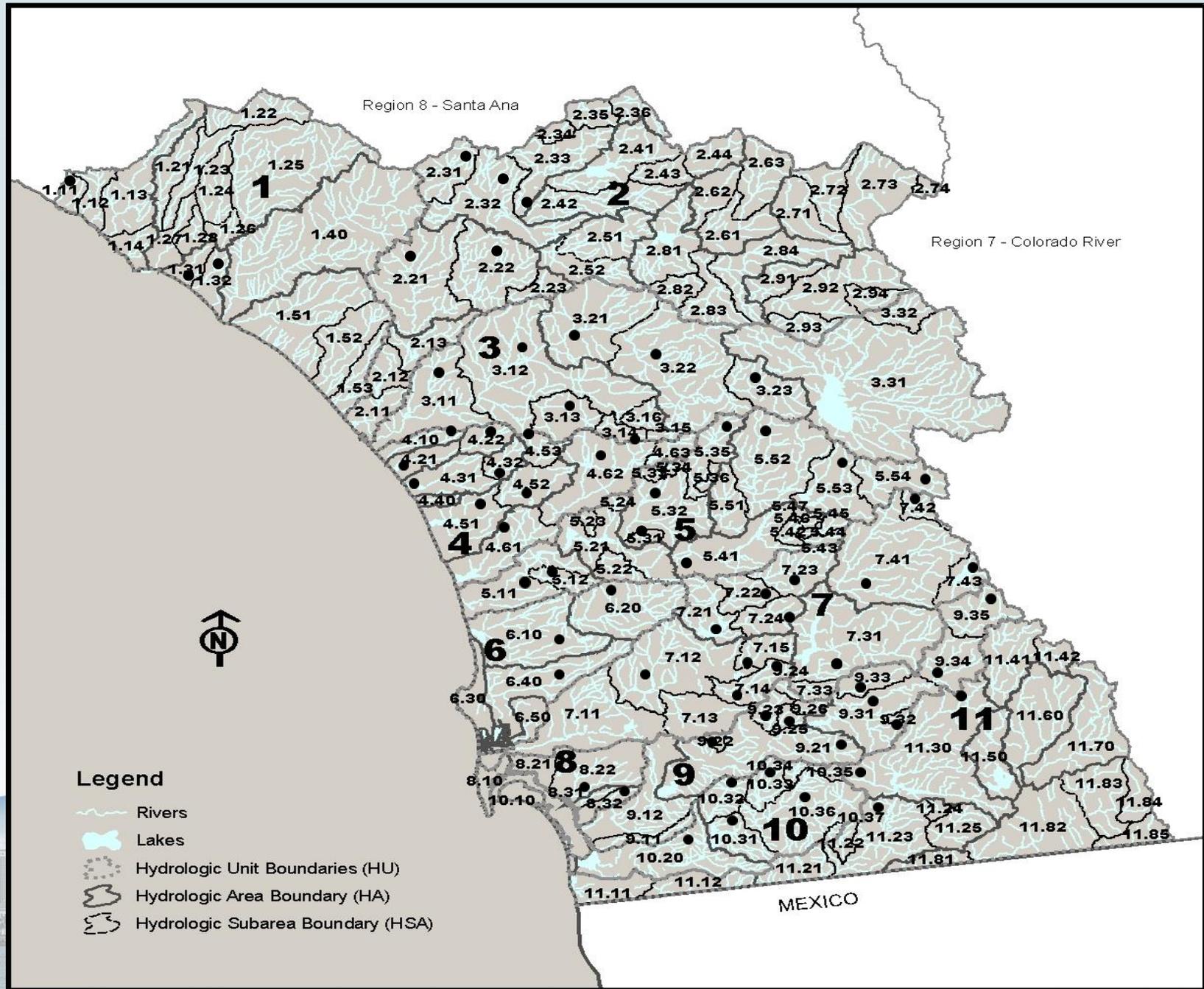


# Project Description

## Change Nitrate WQO to 45 mg/L as NO<sub>3</sub>

- Currently below MCL for 44 groundwater basins.
- Exception is the Warner Valley HA
- No changes to surface water objectives





Region 8 - Santa Ana

Region 7 - Colorado River

MEXICO

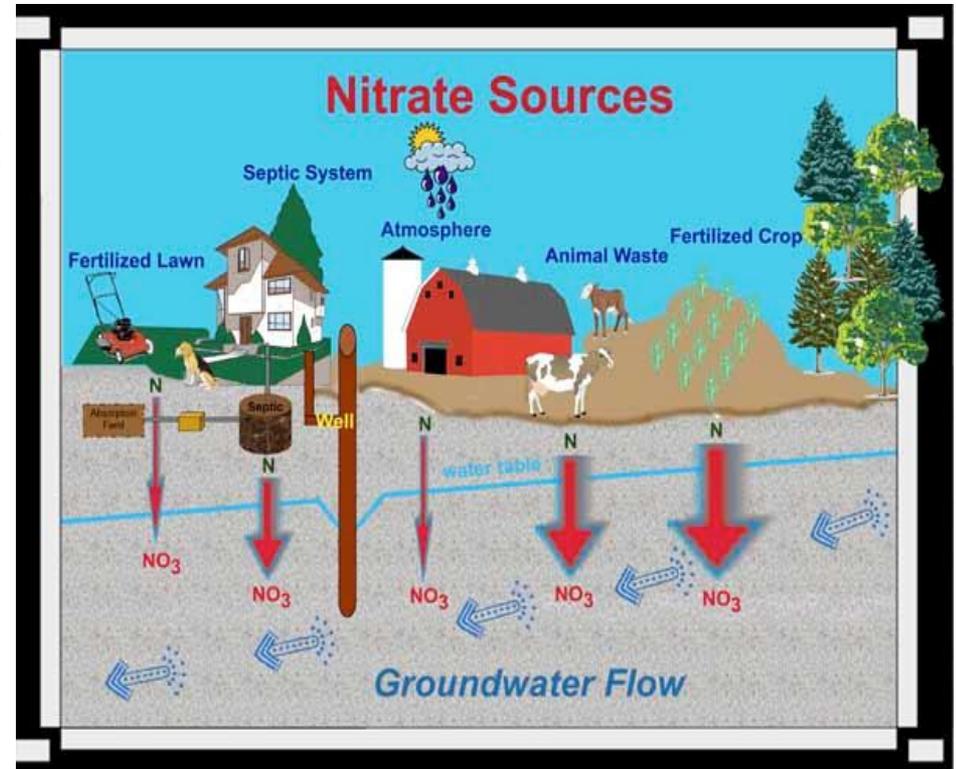
**Legend**

-  Rivers
-  Lakes
-  Hydrologic Unit Boundaries (HU)
-  Hydrologic Area Boundary (HA)
-  Hydrologic Subarea Boundary (HSA)



# Nitrate in Groundwater

- Nitrate WQOs set at 5, 10, 15, or 45 mg/L
- Contributors of nitrate:
  - Fertilizer application
  - Septic systems
  - Recycled water and wastewater
  - Manure and compost
  - Animal operations
  - Landscape irrigation



# Rationale for Changing Nitrate WQO

- Promote increased use of recycled water
- Reduce cost of treating recycled water
- Consistent with State Recycled Water Policy
- Help reduce reliance on imported water supplies

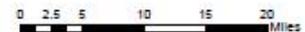
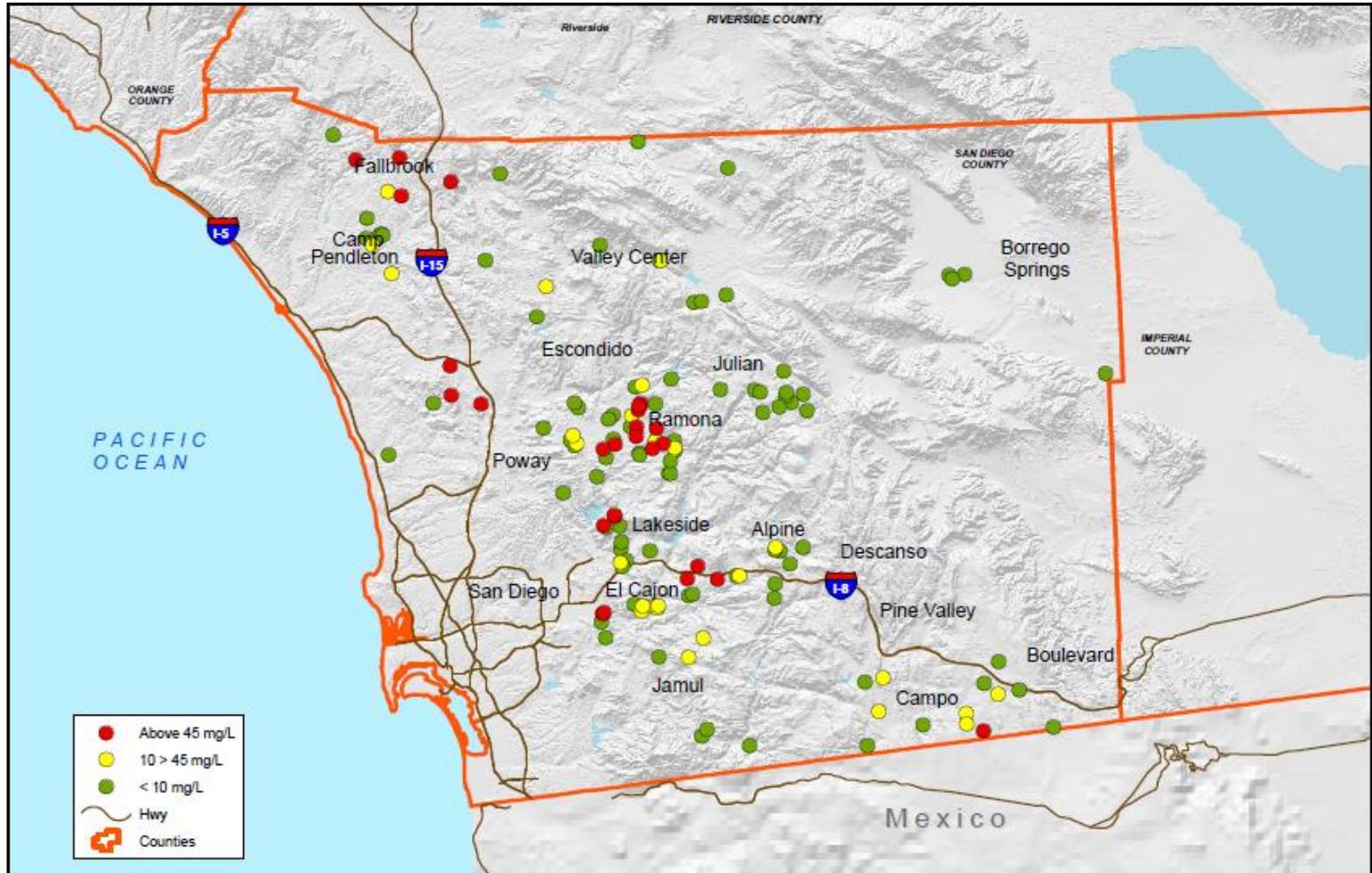


# Rationale for Changing Nitrate WQO

- 45 mg/L is protective of beneficial uses
- MCL is protective of sensitive populations
- Can require more stringent effluent limits in WDRs
- Data shows nitrate below 45 mg/L
- Consistent with State OWTS Policy

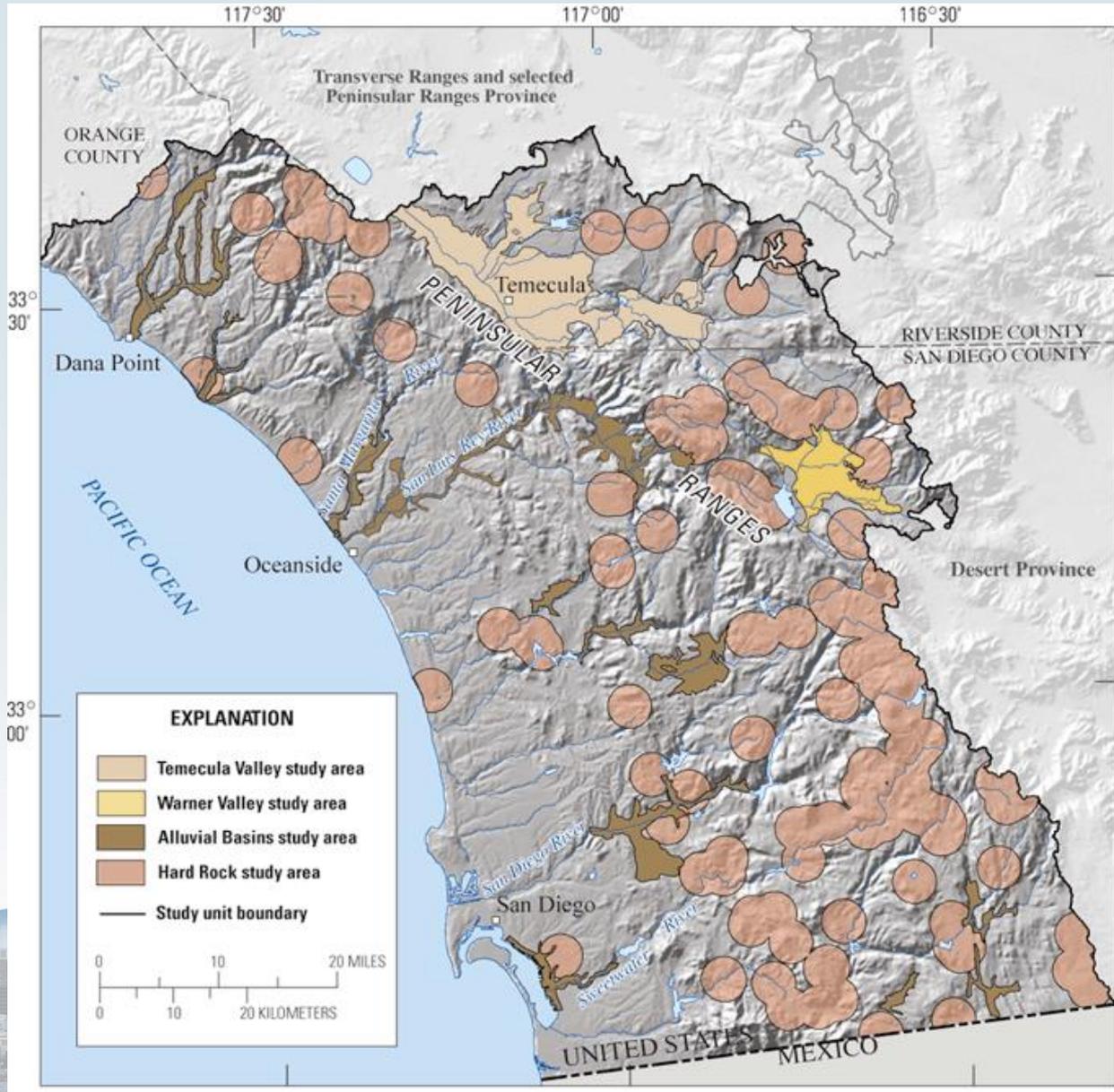


# GAMA Domestic Well Study (2010)



- Nitrate detected in 96 of 137 wells
- Above MCL in 25 wells

# GAMA Public Well Study (2004)



- Nitrate detected in 17 of 24 wells
- All below 45mg/L



<b>Basin</b>	<b>Tier</b>	<b>Groundwater Quality-Nitrate (mg/L as NO<sub>3</sub>)</b>	<b>Nitrate WQO (mg/L as NO<sub>3</sub>)</b>
Lower Santa Margarita	A	Ave nitrate (1)	10
San Pasqual	A	Nitrate range (<0.2-174)	10
San Juan	A	Nitrate range (ND-15)	10 or 45
Temecula	A	Ave nitrate (1-11)	10
Santee	A	Nitrate range (1.4-43.7)	45
Escondido	B	Nitrate range (5-160), ave nitrate (38)	10
Gower	C	Ave nitrate in residential areas (25-30)	5

<b>Basin</b>	<b>Assimilative Capacity at Nitrate WQO</b>	<b>Assimilative Capacity at Nitrate MCL</b>
<b>Lower Santa Margarita</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>San Pasqual</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>San Juan</b>	<b>Yes (in most parts of basin)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Temecula</b>	<b>in portions of the basin</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Santee</b>	<b>To be determined</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Escondido</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Gower</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>

# **CEQA Requirements and Basin Plan Amendments**

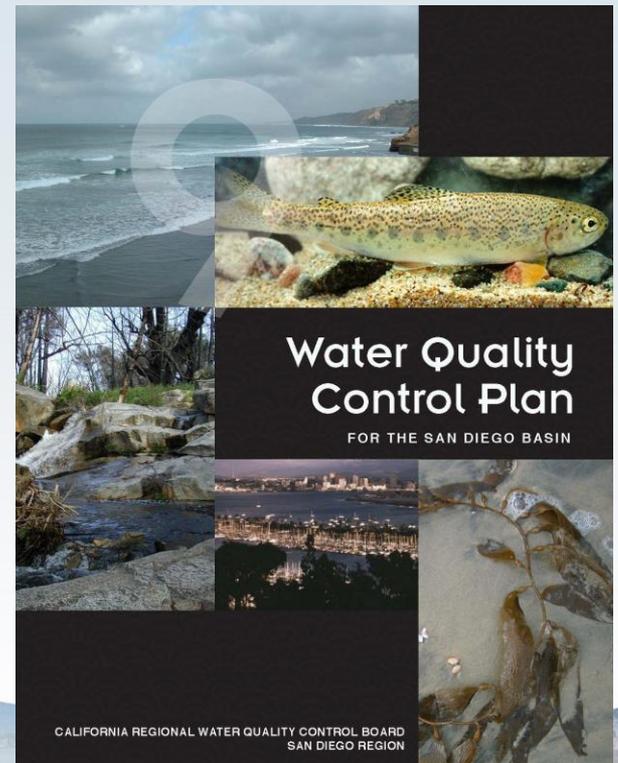
Jody Ebsen

Engineering Geologist



# CEQA Requirements for Basin Plan Amendments

- Basin Plan Amendments (BPA) are CEQA Projects
- Certified Regulatory Program



- CEQA Requirements

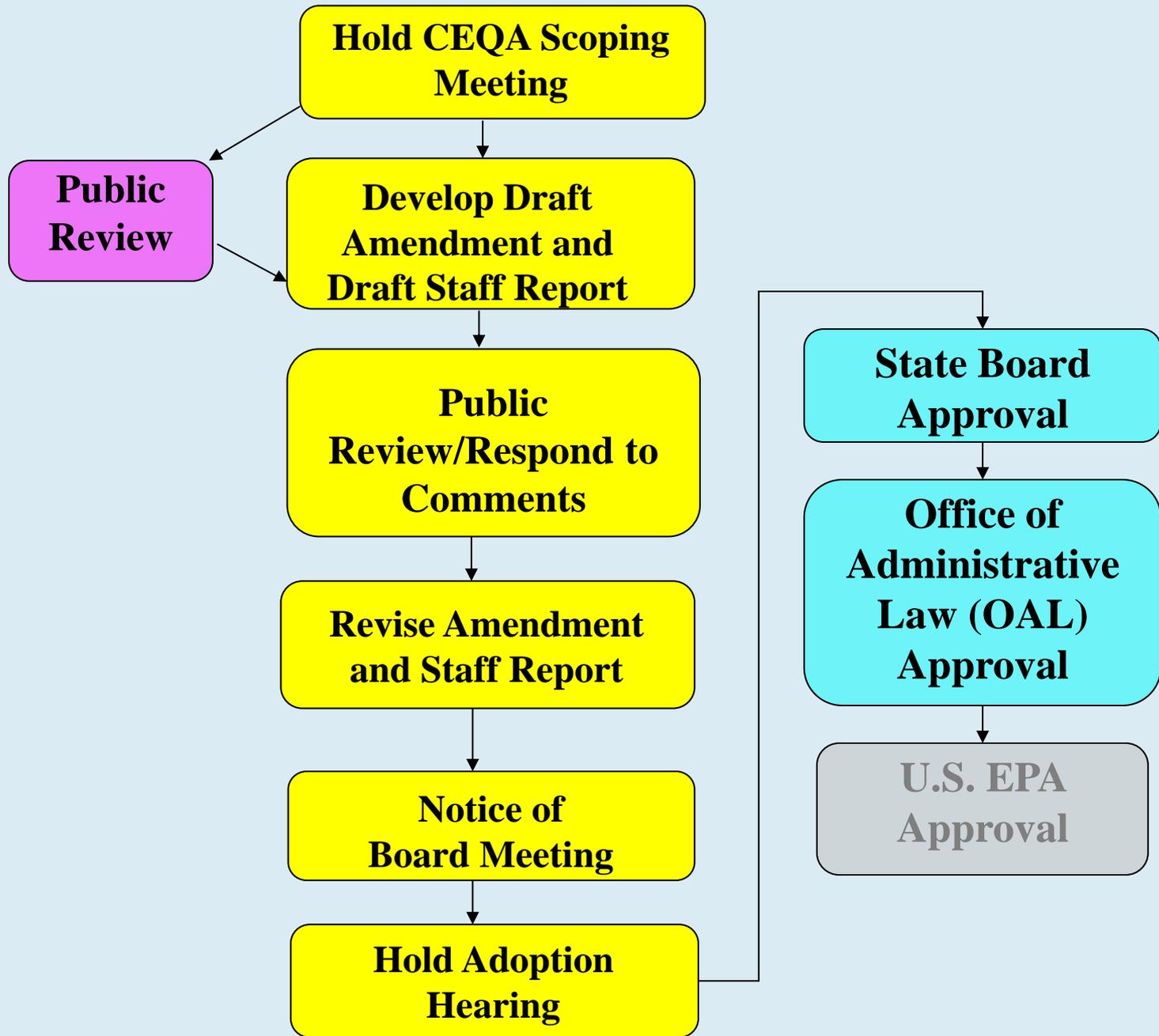


- With Slight Variations

# CEQA Requirements

- Exempted from EIR or Negative Declaration
- Substitute Environmental Document (SED)
  - Technical Report
  - Basin Plan Amendment Language
  - CEQA Checklist
- Substitute Environmental Document (SED)





# Environmental Analysis of Methods of Compliance

- Identify reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance
- Significant adverse impacts associated with methods of compliance
- Less significant adverse impacts
- Reasonably foreseeable mitigation measures
- Finding if no significant adverse impacts





# Draft Environmental Checklist

- Contains environmental analysis of project and methods of compliance
- Concludes project will not have significant impact on the environment



# Draft Environmental Checklist

- Accepting comments
- Will release Draft SED
- Requesting additional data





## Questions/Comments

**Fisayo Osibodu, San Diego Water Board**  
**(619) 521-8036 or**  
**[Olufisayo.Osibodu@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Olufisayo.Osibodu@waterboards.ca.gov)**

