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**Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board**

**CERTIFIED MAIL No.: 7013 0600 0000 1712 0880**

March 18, 2014

Ismael Gomez, Interim Manager, Water  
Imperial Irrigation District  
P.O. Box 937  
Imperial, CA 92251

Dear Mr. Gomez:

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 303(d) LIST OF IMPAIRED WATER BODIES IN THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**

Thank you for your letter received by the Colorado River Basin Water Board on March 11, 2014, regarding proposed revisions to the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) List of the impaired water bodies in the Colorado River Basin Region. Your comments (quoted in italics) are addressed below in the order presented in your letter.

**Comment 1**

*"We can appreciate the proposed delisting of several constituents, as the action is in response to observed water quality improvement and/or revised objectives. However, we are concerned with new listings that are being proposed for the Alamo River and New River."*

**Response 1**

The Colorado River Basin Water Board is mandated, pursuant to CWA Section 303(d), to add, to remove, or not to list waters depending on whether the applicable water quality standards (WQSS) are being met. Based on the readily available data, Board staff identified the Alamo River and the New River as impaired by several pollutants, as proposed for new listings and other existing pollutants. The purpose of the CWA Section 303(d) updates is not to specify any control measures, to identify any impairment sources, and/or to take regulatory actions on the impairment. Instead, the purpose is simply to carry out this federal statutory requirement by identifying those water bodies not meeting, or not expected to meet, applicable WQSS after the application of certain technology-based controls. Thus, these updates, by themselves, do not require the IID or any other dischargers to take any actions with respect to the pollutants listed on the 303(d) List. If or when the Colorado River Basin Water Board decides to address these impairments, and depending on the available data at that time, some actions for impairment control may be developed by the Board for dischargers identified as being potentially responsible for the impairments.

ELLEN WAY, CHAIR | ROBERT PERDUE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Comment 2**

*"The concern associated with the new listing of chloride is particularly problematic.... The IID is concerned that the addition of chloride on the 303(d) list could result in an effort to restrict future discharges of leach water from Imperial Valley's agricultural industry."*

**Response 2**

Colorado River Basin Water Board staff understands that achieving chloride WQs in the Alamo and New Rivers will be a difficult task. However, we disagree with your comment that "[t]he addition of chloride on the 303(d) list could result in an effort to restrict future discharges of leach water from Imperial Valley's agricultural industry." As stated in Response 1, the Colorado River Basin Water Board is mandated, pursuant to CWA Section 303(d), to add, to remove, or not to list waters depending on whether the applicable WQs are being met. The purpose of the CWA Section 303(d) updates is not to specify any control measures, to identify any impairment sources, and/or to take regulatory actions on the impairment. Also, please see Response 1 to Comment 1 for further information regarding the purpose of the CWA Section 303(d) updates.

In conclusion, Colorado River Basin Water Board staff will be continuing to recommend that the proposed changes to the 303(d) List be approved by the Colorado River Basin Water Board. If you have further questions, please contact me at (760) 776-8942, or Dr. Jeong-Hee Lim at (760) 776-8940.

Sincerely,



Nadim Shukry-Zeywar  
Senior Environmental Scientist  
TMDL Unit Chief  
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

JHL/sw

Enclosure: Letter from the State Board dated March 18, 2014, to the USEPA regarding "Clean Water Act Section 303(d)/305(b) Integrated Report Process moving forward"

cc: Tom Vandenberg, Office of the Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board  
Steve Charlton, IID

File: 2012 section 303(d) List