



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

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CC: SW

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JUN 5 2002

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Mr. Stanley Martinson
Chief, Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814

DWQ Received
Division Chief's Office

JUN 10 2002

Dear Mr. Martinson:

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to update the list of surface waterbodies for which water quality standards are not attained, or are not expected to be attained with the implementation of technology-based controls. It is our understanding that your agency is currently contemplating updating that list for California.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommends that Agua Hedionda Lagoon, in the San Diego area, and Huntington Harbour, in the Santa Ana area, be added to the Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of water quality limited segments. We believe both of these water bodies are impaired due to infestations of *Caulerpa taxifolia*.

Caulerpa taxifolia is a highly invasive marine alga that was found in Agua Hedionda Lagoon in June 2000 and in Huntington Harbour in August 2000. These are the first known infestations along the Pacific Coast of North America. The introduction and spread of this seaweed throughout the Mediterranean has already resulted in devastating ecological and economic consequences. Similar dire consequences are likely to result in California if *Caulerpa taxifolia* is not eradicated. *Caulerpa taxifolia* may be the most threatening form of pollution of California's marine waters originating from nonpoint sources.

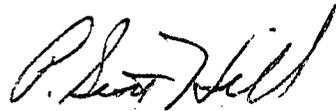
NMFS believes there is ample justification for listing Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Huntington Harbour as impaired for *Caulerpa taxifolia*. As a biological material released into Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Huntington Harbor through discharges of waste, *Caulerpa taxifolia* can be considered a pollutant, as defined in the Clean Water Act.



The presence of *Caulerpa taxifolia* impairs and threatens greater impairment of the beneficial uses of Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Huntington Harbour, including estuarine habitat, marine habitat, contact water recreation, and commercial and sport fishing. If *Caulerpa taxifolia* spreads to the ocean, the beneficial uses of the entire Pacific Coast also are at risk. ↙

Thank you for the opportunity to identify water quality limited segments. We are hopeful that you will adopt our recommendation. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Robert Hoffman, of my staff, at 562-980-4043 or via email at: bob.hoffman@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



Rodney R. McInnis
Acting Regional Administrator