

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

**Restoration Plan for Lower Tijuana River Fecal Indicator Bacteria and Trash
Total Maximum Daily Loads**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) is releasing the draft *Lower Tijuana River Indicator Bacteria and Trash Advance Restoration Plan for Total Maximum Daily Loads* (draft ARP) for public comment.

An ARP addresses water quality impairments through an implementation plan with actions to restore and maintain water quality standards. Waters with an ARP remain on the Clean Water Act section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments until requirements to remove the 303(d) listing are met. Board staff developed the draft ARP in response to direction from the San Diego Water Board to identify a plan for water quality restoration to address impairments to human and wildlife beneficial uses of water in and around the lower Tijuana River due to high levels of bacteria and trash.

The lower Tijuana River refers to the stretch of the river that crosses the border from Mexico into the U.S., traverses the Tijuana River Valley and the Tijuana River Estuary, and ultimately reaches the Pacific Ocean. For decades, this stretch of river has not met water quality standards. The significant sources of indicator bacteria and trash causing the impairments are routine and episodic transboundary flows from Mexico often comprised of untreated domestic and industrial wastewater.

The draft ARP identifies sources of trash and indicator bacteria pollution, establishes numeric targets to achieve water quality standards in the river, and identifies potential actions for pollution control in an implementation plan. The ARP is centered on the expectation of the San Diego Water Board that the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to implement the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) Comprehensive Infrastructure Solution projects (described in the draft ARP) to significantly reduce indicator bacteria and trash loads in transboundary flows.

The San Diego Water Board will consider the ARP for approval at a later date.

Document Availability

The draft ARP will be available online by January 10, 2024:

www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/tmdls/tijuanarivervalley.html

Interested parties may receive copies of the draft ARP by contacting Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039, or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov, or by visiting the San Diego Water Board office at 2375 Northside Drive, Suite 100, San Diego, California 92108-2700, weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Submission of Written Comments

Notice is hereby given that the San Diego Water Board will accept written comments regarding the draft ARP in accordance with this notice. The written comment period provides an opportunity for interested parties to comment on the draft ARP. All written comments regarding the draft ARP must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 13, 2024, to be considered by the San Diego Water Board.

Comments may be submitted by e-mail to sandiego@waterboards.ca.gov. The subject line of all written comments must include “Comment – Tijuana River ARP (CG; CW-650436).” Written comments sent by mail must be addressed to California Regional Water Quality Control Board – San Diego Region, 2375 Northside Drive, Suite 100, San Diego, California 92108-2700, and ATTN: Cynthia Gorham. Board staff will prepare written responses to significant comments that are timely received.

Public Workshop

The San Diego Water Board will hold two public workshops for the draft ARP. The purpose of the public workshops is for the San Diego Water Board to: (1) provide an overview of the draft ARP, (2) receive verbal comments from interested parties on the draft ARP, and (3) receive verbal comments on any concerns related to environmental justice or potential impacts on water quality for disadvantaged communities and/or Native American Tribes due to the draft ARP’s future implementation.

The San Diego Water Board will conduct the public workshops at the following times and locations:

Date	Time	Location
Monday, February 26, 2024	1:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.	Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR) 301 Caspian Way Imperial Beach, CA 91932
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.	via Zoom

Those interested in attending the February 28, 2024, virtual workshop must register using the following link:

https://waterboards.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OYktCn5nTVmwBuoSJb9rMA#/registration

Zoom will provide registered individuals with a link to join the workshop via a confirmation email.

Accessibility

Individuals who have special accommodation needs or require interpreter services, should contact Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039, or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov at least 10 business prior to the workshop.

Contact for Further Information

Please contact Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039, or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov for additional information regarding the workshops or the draft ARP. Please share this information with any person who would be interested in this matter.

Date of Notice: December 28, 2023