STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGIONAL BOARD
NOVEMBER 15, 2022

ITEM 3

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION TO ESTABLISH A TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ORGANOPHOSPHATE AND ORGANOCHLORINE COMPOUNDS IN IMPERIAL VALLEY WATERS, IMPERIAL COUNTY.

DISCUSSION

On May 10, 2022, the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Colorado River Basin Water Board) adopted Resolution R7-2022-0032, including Attachment A and Attachment B, amending the Basin Plan to establish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for organophosphate (OP) and organochlorine (OC) compounds in Imperial Valley waters—specifically, the Alamo River, Imperial Valley Drains, the New River and Wiest Lake.

The Basin Plan Amendment was developed to address OP and/or OC compounds that are impairing Imperial Valley waters. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region (Basin Plan) includes water quality objectives for toxicity, chemical constituents, and pesticide waste objectives for all Imperial Valley waters. A review of water quality data from Imperial Valley waters indicates the presence of OP and OC compounds in concentrations that violate water quality objectives (WQOs). To address these impairments, numeric targets for water, fish tissue, and sediment were selected to protect benthic and aquatic organisms, and wildlife from potentially harmful effects (toxicity) associated with OP and OC compounds. Numeric targets are based on toxicity guidelines of pollutants outlined in other federal and state regulations, plans, and policies, and published peer reviewed scientific reports as screening values.

For the purposes of Clean Water Act section 303(d), the following surface waters are considered impaired:

a. The Alamo River and the New River in Imperial Valley are impaired with respect to the organophosphate (OP) compounds—specifically, chlorpyrifos, diazinon, and malathion;

b. Imperial Valley Drains are impaired by chlorpyrifos; and

c. The Alamo River, Imperial Valley Drains, and New River are impaired by the organochlorine (OC) compounds—specifically, chlordane, DDT, DDE and/or DDD (both DDT degradates), dieldrin, PCBs, and toxaphene; and

d. The 40-acre Wiest Lake is impaired by DDT, dieldrin, and PCBs.

This project establishes TMDLs to address the impairments that include numeric targets, load allocations, and implementation plans to control discharges of OP and OC compounds in Imperial Valley waters.

Sources of OP and OC compounds are primarily from irrigated agricultural lands based upon pesticide use restrictions, the uses of the compounds, the amount of land used for agricultural purposes, and water quality data. For OP and OC compounds TMDLs, the connection between pollutant load and desired water quality is established because the load allocations are equal to the numeric targets, which are the same as the TMDLs. Point sources are assigned waste load allocations and nonpoint sources are assigned load allocations. The applicable numeric targets for OP and OC compounds will be implemented in permits as waste load and load allocations in the Alamo River, Imperial Valley Drains, New River, and Wiest Lake for pollutants in the water column, fish tissue and sediment.

Colorado River Basin Water Board staff will conduct a review of implementation activities when monitoring and reporting data is submitted as required in the implementation plan. Colorado River Basin Water Board staff will pursue modification as necessary, to address remaining impairments from OP and OC compounds during the TMDLs implementation phase.

POLICY ISSUE

Whether State Water Board should approve the Colorado River Basin Water Board's Basin Plan Amendment establishing TMDLs for OP and OC compounds in Imperial Valley Waters, as adopted per Resolution R7-2022-0032.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Colorado River Basin Water Board has considered the cost of implementing the proposed Basin Plan Amendment and find the proposed TMDL Implementation Program does not impose any new obligations or requirements. Consequently, no cost estimates are required.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

Approval of Colorado River Basin Water Board Resolution R7-2022-0032 will amend and update the region's operative Basin Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the State Water Board:

1. Approve the Basin Plan Amendment per Resolution R7-2022-0032.

2. Authorize the Executive Director or designee to submit the Basin Plan Amendment, adopted per Resolution R7-2022-0032, and the administrative

record for this action, to the Office of Administrative Law and the TMDL Project to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval.