Evaluation of the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) and Agricultural Supply (AGR) Beneficial Uses in a Portion of the Historical Tulare Lakebed

Notice of Public Workshop and California Environmental Quality Act Public Scoping Meeting 14 April 2015

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Staff from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board or Board) will hold a Public Workshop and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting to discuss and solicit comments and suggestions from the public regarding potential amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin (Tulare Lake Basin Plan).

The Board is in a multi-year process under which it is evaluating the beneficial uses assigned to surface and groundwaters by the Board's Basin Plans. As a part of that process, the Board is:

- Evaluating whether a portion of the groundwater in the historical Tulare Lakebed (within the South Valley Floor hydrologic unit 558.30, Figure II-1 of the Tulare Lake Basin Plan) actually supports the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) beneficial use, and, if not, whether it may be eligible for de-designation consistent with State Water Board Resolution No. 88-63 (*Sources of Drinking Water Policy*).
- Considering the de-designation of the MUN and Agricultural supply (AGR) beneficial uses in portions of the Tulare Lakebed where those beneficial uses have not been historically supported and/or where those beneficial uses are not currently supported.
- Considering the adoption of site-specific objectives or the development of subcategories of the AGR beneficial use where a full range of AGR beneficial uses (for example, irrigation of salt-sensitive crops using groundwater) have not historically been supported and/or where a full range of AGR beneficial uses are not currently supported.
- Considering amending the Tulare Lake Basin Plan to incorporate a framework for evaluating the applicability of the MUN and AGR beneficial uses and associated water quality objectives, including implementation provisions applicable in specific groundwater basins.

BACKGROUND: The Central Valley Water Board recognized the need to evaluate existing beneficial use designations during the March 2010 Tulare Lake Basin Triennial Review. The Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) initiative also identified the need to evaluate these use designations as part of the development of solutions to the salt problem in the Central Valley Region. The Tulare Lake Basin Plan may currently designate portions of the groundwater as supporting beneficial uses that have not been historically supported and/or are not currently supported.

Beneficial uses, as well as the associated water quality objectives designed to provide reasonable protection of those uses, may be altered by amending the Basin Plan, provided that such amendments are consistent with the policies set forth in Water Code section 13000 et seq.

and any other state policy for water quality control. The Tulare Lake Drainage District, in coordination with CV-SALTS, has provided funding for a registered professional geologist to collect data and characterize groundwater in a portion of the historical Tulare Lakebed. This data collection and characterization effort, which will be discussed at the workshop, may provide valuable information in support of future basin planning efforts.

Additional information regarding this study and potential proposed amendments is available at the Central Valley Water Board's Internet website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity/tulare_lakebed_mun_evaluation/index.shtml

An information document will be available on the website by 25 March 2015. Copies of these documents can also be obtained by contacting or visiting the Central Valley Water Board's office at: 1685 E Street, Fresno, California 93706 weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC SCOPING/EARLY CONSULTATION MEETING PURPOSE: The meeting will provide participants, including other public agencies, with:

(1) Background on previous work conducted on evaluating appropriate beneficial uses and application of the *Sources of Drinking Water Policy*;

(2) an overview of conditions in the historical Tulare Lakebed archetype study area and the applicability of this information to future Basin Planning efforts both in this area and elsewhere in the Central Valley Region;

(3) an opportunity to comment on the potential alternatives that have been identified to evaluate the MUN and AGR beneficial uses in a defined portion of the groundwater basin within the historical Tulare Lakebed study area, and to provide comments on other potential alternatives, reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance, potentially significant impacts, cumulative impacts, and mitigation measures;

(4) an opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the proposed amendments and environmental documents to be prepared pursuant to CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and the Central Valley Water Board's certified regulatory program for basin planning (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15251, subd. (g); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3775 et seq.).

WORKSHOP/CEQA SCOPING MEETING TIME AND LOCATION:
The facilities will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Pam Buford at (559) 445-5576 at least 5 working days prior to the meetings. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

Date:	Tuesday, 14 April 2015
Time:	1:00 p.m.
Place:	Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District 1001 Chase Avenue Corcoran, CA 93212

Written comments should be submitted to Pam Buford no later than 30 April 2015 (contact information provided below). Interested persons are encouraged to submit comments electronically. Send comments by email to: centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov. Please indicate in the subject line "Comment Letter – Tulare Lakebed MUN AGR Evaluation". Written comments and comments provided at the workshops will be reviewed and considered as Board

Staff begin to draft recommendations for Basin Plan amendments and a draft staff report for the Central Valley Water Board's consideration in 2016. All comments will be included in the final administrative record.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Questions regarding these issues should be directed to Pam Buford at (559) 445-5576 or pbuford@waterboards.ca.gov. To continue receiving notifications regarding this Basin Plan amendment, you must subscribe to the "Tulare Lakebed Municipal Beneficial Use Evaluation" mailing list through our webpage at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg5_subscribe.shtml or complete the attached form and return it to:

Pam Buford
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706

Please bring the above information to the attention of those who may be interested.

Original signed by

Clay Rodgers, Assistant Executive Officer

13 March 2015

CONTINUED NOTIFICATIONS

To continue receiving notifications regarding the issue in the attached notice, you **must** sign up for the electronic mailing list or complete the form below and return it to:

Pam Buford
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706

Persons wishing to subscribe to the electronic mailing list can do so through our website by clicking on the "Subscribe" button on the right side of our webpage at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg5_subscribe.shtml.

This Continued Notifications only applies to the issues described in the enclosed notice. If you are not interested in this issue, do nothing and you will remain on the basin plan mailing list for future amendments.

Name _____
Affiliation _____
Address _____
_____
_____
Phone Numbers _____
E-mail _____

☐ Tulare Lakebed Municipal Beneficial Use Evaluation

_____ Yes, please send notifications on the checked item, above, to my postal address.
_____ Yes, please send notifications on the checked item, above, to my e-mail address.
_____ I have received multiple paper notifications; please remove duplicates from your database.
_____ No, I am not interested in these issues but would like to remain on the mailing list.
  ___ You can send notifications to my e-mail address.
  ___ Continue sending notifications to my postal address.
_____ No, I am not interested in Basin Plan Amendments; please remove me from this mailing list.

Pam Buford
Regional Water Quality Control Board
1685 E Street
Fresno CA 93706