



Linda S. Adams
Acting Secretary for
Environmental Protection

California Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region

Geoffrey M. Hales, Chairman

www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California 95403
Phone: (877) 721-9203 (toll free) • Office: (707) 576-2220 • FAX: (707) 523-0135



Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

July 12, 2011

Dear Landowner:

The Shasta River TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Action Plan was adopted by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) and became state law on January 26, 2007. It establishes requirements to control discharges of waste in order to improve water quality (temperature reduction and increased oxygen levels) and related stream conditions for beneficial uses, which include habitat for salmon and steelhead trout. Pursuant to the Action Plan, landowners who choose to participate in on-going collaborative water quality protection programs in the watershed and implement recommended measures identified in the TMDL Action Plan are eligible for coverage under the TMDL Conditional Waiver Program.

The TMDL Action Plan has two actions required by landowners who irrigate land or graze livestock near a river or stream:

1. Annual reporting to the Regional Water Board.
2. Working with the Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (SVRCD) or Regional Water Board to implement best management practices related to irrigated lands and grazing practices.

Annual Reporting

The TMDL Action Plan requires landowners to report annually to the Regional Water Board on progress they have made to address water quality issues on their farm or ranch. This reporting requirement is met by completing and sending in the enclosed Reporting Form. Additional reporting requirements are being fulfilled by presentations to the Regional Water Board by the SVRCD and Regional Water Board staff. Information from the landowner reports will be used to assist the SVRCD in compiling the 5-year report that will be presented to the Regional Water Board on September 29, 2011.

California Environmental Protection Agency

Recycled Paper

Landowners who reported in 2008 (as required by law) are currently enrolled in the TMDL Conditional Waiver Program. We thank those who have enrolled for their participation in the program. In order to continue enrollment in the Shasta River TMDL Conditional Waiver Program, please complete the enclosed Reporting Form. If you did not report in 2008, completion and submission of the reporting form will initiate your coverage under the Conditional Waiver Program. Submit your completed Reporting Form to Andy Baker at the Regional Water Board by **August 7th**. No fees are required. Landowners whose activities do not cause or threaten to cause a discharge should still complete the Reporting Form. Landowners who do not enroll in the Program by returning the form may be required to file a Report of Waste Discharge (RWD) and obtain Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR), which carry an annual permit fee pursuant to Water Code section 13269.

Implementing Best Management Practices

The TMDL Action Plan also requires landowners to implement actions on their land that control discharges and lead to improvements in Shasta River water quality. The SVRCD has agreed to assist landowners who would like to learn more about and/or undertake projects on their property that would meet the requirements of the Shasta River TMDL Action Plan. Programs available through the SVRCD that address the TMDL Action Plan requirements include ranch water quality improvement planning, tailwater management, fencing and riparian protection/management, water conservation and other water management practices that result in increased dedicated cold water instream flow in the Shasta River and its tributaries. The Regional Water Board encourages landowners to work with the SVRCD and take advantage of these programs. Landowners also have the option of working directly with the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The Shasta River TMDL Action Plan identifies tailwater discharges as a source of water quality pollution due to the potential to increase water temperature and add nutrients, which can decrease dissolved oxygen in the Shasta River and its tributaries. Water quality can be improved through irrigation water and tailwater management. A brochure showing methods for improving water quality through tailwater minimization is enclosed.

The Shasta River TMDL Action Plan also identifies a goal of increasing shade along the Shasta River and its tributaries to keep water cool. The SVRCD has received funding that can assist with riparian protection and planting projects and will be prioritizing projects in the near future.

If you would like to receive technical assistance for projects addressing tailwater, instream flows, and riparian protection, please note your interest on the TMDL reporting form or contact the SVRCD at 530-842-6121, x106. By doing so, you will be put on a priority list for funding.

Workshops

In cooperation with the SVRCD, staff of the Regional Water Board will hold a TMDL Conditional Waiver Program compliance workshop on July 27, 2011 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Montague Community Center, 200 South 11th Street, Montague, California. Additional information about the workshops is available on our website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdls/shasta_river/

The TMDL Conditional Waiver Program expires in January 2012. Between now and January, the Regional Water Board will be evaluating the success of the existing program and may make changes to the program requirements as needed to improve the program and suggest actions to be taken to improve water quality conditions in the Shasta River and its tributaries. The Regional Water Board will be making their decision after evaluation of the information received from landowners and presentations at the September 29, 2011 Board meeting. The input provided by landowners is important and we greatly appreciate the time and effort taken by landowners to submit the Reporting Form.

You may also contact Andy Baker at the Regional Water Board at (707) 576-2690 or ABaker@waterboards.ca.gov for further information about TMDL requirements and compliance, technical support, or other assistance.

Sincerely,

Catherine Kuhlman
Executive Officer

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Attachments:

1. Tailwater Brochure
2. Reporting Form