

TMDL AND CEQA SCOPING SUMMARY

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLS) FOR NITRATE IN STREAMS OF THE CARPINTERIA SALT MARSH WATERSHED

What is a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)?

[TMDLs](#) are strategies to improve water quality and restore clean water. The federal Clean Water Act requires every state to evaluate its waterbodies and maintain a list of waters that are impaired either because the water exceeds water quality standards or does not achieve its designated [beneficial uses](#). This is known as California's federal Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies (303(d) list). For central coast waterbodies that are on the [303\(d\) list](#), the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) must develop and implement a plan to reduce pollutants so that the waterbody is no longer impaired and can be removed from the impaired waters list.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a term used to describe the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet [water quality standards](#). A TMDL study identifies the probable sources of pollution, establishes the maximum amount of pollution a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and allocates that amount to all probable contributing sources.

Project Area

The project area is the Carpinteria Salt Marsh watershed (watershed), which encompasses an area of approximately 9 square miles. The watershed is located in southeastern Santa Barbara County, immediately west of the City of Carpinteria and about 10 miles east of the City of Santa Barbara. Approximately three-fourths of the drainage in this watershed is attributed to the steep, south-facing slopes of the Santa Ynez Mountains.

There are two major drainages within the watershed, Santa Monica Creek and Franklin Creek, which drain through Carpinteria Salt Marsh. The salt marsh also receives drainage from surrounding urban and agricultural areas within the watershed via ditches, drains, and culvert conveyances.

Project Description

The proposed project will develop nitrate TMDLs for 303(d) listed waterbodies within the Carpinteria Salt Marsh watershed. Franklin Creek is on the 303(d) list due to excessive levels of nitrate and Santa Monica Creek is not on the 303(d) list.

Carpinteria Salt Marsh was placed on the 303(d) list due to nutrients and organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen in the mid 1990's. The basis for these listings is not consistent with

the current 303(d) listing criteria contained in the *Water Quality Control Policy for Developing California's Clean Water Act Section 3030(d) List*, September 2004, amended February 2015 ([Listing Policy](#)). In addition, adequate water quality data is not available to evaluate these impairments in a manner consistent with the Listing Policy. As a result, Carpinteria Salt Marsh TMDLs that specifically address these impairments is not proposed at this time. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is developing [nutrient objectives](#) for California which will provide guidance on addressing these impairments and establishing future nutrient-related TMDLs for the Carpinteria Salt Marsh if necessary.



Carpinteria Salt Marsh watershed

What are the Sources of Water Quality Problems?

Source analysis is a key component of TMDL development. The primary sources of nitrate are considered to be:

- Fertilizer application and runoff from agricultural lands;
- Base flow of nitrate impacted groundwater into streams;
- Stormwater runoff from urban areas;
- Inadequate function of septic systems; and
- Natural background and atmospheric deposition.

The TMDL Process

TMDLs are developed by Central Coast Water Board staff (staff) and must go through an approval process before they can go into effect. At a minimum, TMDLs must be approved by the Central Coast Water Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Public participation is an element of TMDL development and staff notifies interested parties of opportunities for public participation through public meetings/workshops. We also solicit public comments and encourage other forms of public participation through correspondence, email, and other informal contacts.

We anticipate developing this TMDL in 2016.

CEQA Scoping

California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 377.5, subdivision (b) codifies the purpose of a CEQA scoping meeting. This type of early consultation with agencies and the public is helpful to staff in identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, means of compliance and their impacts, and significant environmental effects. Staff will consider all of these environmental effects in development of the proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin. Scoping is an effective way to bring together and resolve the environmental impact concerns of affected federal, state, and local agencies, as well as other interested parties. Interested parties are specifically requested to provide CEQA scoping information about:

- How responsible parties would foreseeably comply with the TMDL;
- The reasonably foreseeable significant environmental impacts associated with those means of compliance;
- Specific evidence supporting that such impacts are reasonably foreseeable, and describing the magnitude (significance) of the impacts;
- Reasonable alternative means of compliance that would have less significant adverse environmental impacts; and
- Reasonable mitigation measures that would minimize any unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the means of compliance.

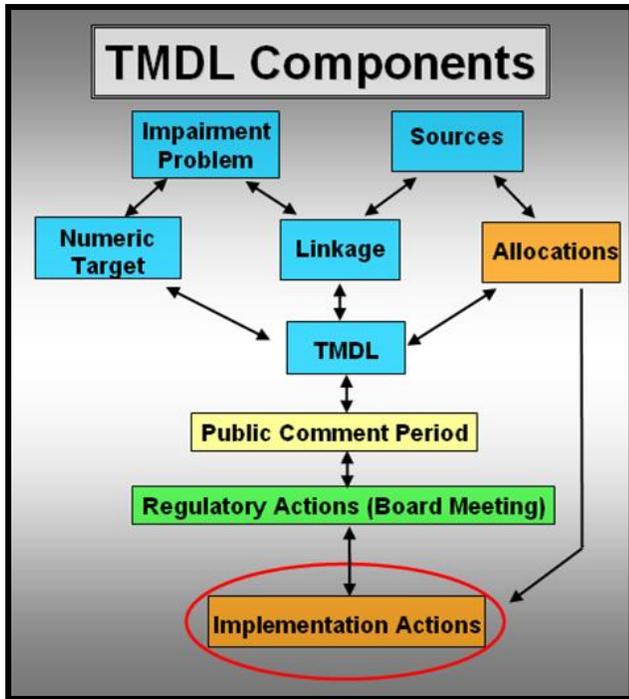
For More Information

Central Coast Water Board staff encourages your participation in this TMDL project. To receive future project announcements please subscribe to the electronic email list by checking the box for the Carpinteria Salt Marsh Nutrient TMDL at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg3_subscribe.shtml

For more information on the Carpinteria Salt Marsh TMDL, please refer to the Central Coast Water Board's webpage at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdl/docs/carpinteria_marsh/index.shtml



TMDL Components

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