
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

August 16, 2022

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND CEQA SCOPING MEETING

Regarding
**Development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) to Address
Biostimulatory Water Quality Impairments
In the Elkhorn Slough Watershed**

**Remote Participation Only
September 26, 2022
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. PDT**

<https://waterboards.zoom.us/j/97400418394>

Or call in (669) 900-9128, Meeting code 974 0041 8394

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) staff will hold a public workshop and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting¹ to seek input on the development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to address biostimulatory water quality impairments in the Elkhorn Slough watershed (TMDL Project). The Central Coast Water Board is the lead state agency charged with the protection of water quality in the Central Coast.

LANGUAGE SERVICES

Non-English language interpretation can be provided for the public workshop and CEQA scoping meeting. If you require non-English-language interpretation, please contact Shanta.Keeling@waterboards.ca.gov at least 10 business days in advance of the meeting.

BACKGROUND

The proposed geographic scope of this TMDL project includes the Elkhorn Slough watershed which encompasses an area of approximately 51 square miles in northern Monterey County. The federal Clean Water Act requires the State to develop TMDLs for waters on the 303(d) List of impaired waters (rivers, streams, and other surface waterbody

¹ Prior to circulating a draft Substitute Environmental Documentation, the board is required to seek early public consultation pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3775.5. Early public consultation may include one or more scoping meetings.

types that do not meet water quality standards²). TMDLs are strategies to restore water quality so that waterbodies attain water quality standards and then can be removed from the 303(d) List. With respect to water impairments that cause or indicate biostimulatory responses, Elkhorn Slough is listed as impaired on the 2020-2022 303(d) List of impaired waterbodies for nitrate, dissolved oxygen, and pH. Bennett Slough, Carneros Creek, and Moss Landing Harbor are within the Elkhorn Slough watershed and have impairments that may induce biostimulatory responses within Elkhorn Slough.

Total maximum daily loads define the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. A TMDL project 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.

PURPOSE

This workshop and CEQA scoping meeting will provide participants with: 1) an explanation and understanding of the TMDL project under development; 2) an opportunity to comment on the TMDL project; and 3) an opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental analysis and environmental documentation for this project.

Interested persons are specifically requested to provide information about:

- How they, or 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 environmental 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.

Central Coast Water Board staff will consider the issues raised and comments provided by attendees, both on the TMDL project and on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental documentation. Issues and comments provided by attendees may assist Central Coast Water Board staff in preparing the final reports that will be presented to the Central Coast Water Board.

Central Coast Water Board staff will solicit oral comments during the meeting. Additionally, if members of the public wish to submit written comments regarding the potential environmental impact issues relevant to CEQA scoping, please

² Water quality standards consist of three components: 1) designated uses of a waterbody (e.g., fishable, swimmable, drinkable), 2) water quality criteria to protect designated uses, and 3) antidegradation requirements to protect existing uses and high quality waters.

submit the written comments no later than October 10, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. To submit written comments, please see the section entitled “*How to Submit Written Comments*” below. Central Coast Water Board staff will not prepare written responses to each individual comment received but will incorporate written responses to all significant environmental points in the final reports that will be provided to the Central Coast Water Board.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All individuals interested in Elkhorn Slough watershed TMDLs, including individuals representing agricultural interests, landowners who own or operate agricultural operations, representatives of municipalities and other public agencies/entities, representatives of environmental groups, and all other individuals interested in TMDLs to address biostimulatory water quality impairments in the Elkhorn Slough watershed.

HOW TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS

Persons wishing to submit written comments regarding CEQA scoping elements for this TMDL project may submit them via e-mail to Shanta Keeling at Shanta.Keeling@waterboards.ca.gov. If you wish to submit CEQA scoping written comments by postal mail, please address to:

Central Coast Water Board
Attn: Shanta Keeling
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Public participation will be remote via an online hosted platform only. Questions, comments, and discussion items will be collected from the public through the video and teleconference platform.

FUTURE NOTICES

Central Coast Water Board staff will hold the public workshop and CEQA scoping meeting at the time and through the format noted above. Any change in the date, time, place, or format of the public workshop and CEQA scoping meeting will be noticed through the Elkhorn Slough Watershed TMDLs e-mail distribution list. Any person interested in receiving future notices, including any changes to this notice of a public workshop and CEQA scoping meeting, must sign up for the e-mail distribution list using the [subscription form](#) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg3_subscribe.html), select the box for “Elkhorn Slough Watershed Biostim TMDL” and provide the required information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding CEQA scoping or the TMDL project please contact Shanta Keeling at Shanta.Keeling@waterboards.ca.gov or at (805) 549-3464.