



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

Mercury in Cache Creek  
Deadline: 7/10/06 5pm

Ms. Tam M. Dudoc  
Chair  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: Comment Letter – Plan for Control of Mercury in Cache Creek

Dear Ms. Dudoc:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments concerning the Proposed Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Valley Region Incorporating a Plan for Control of Mercury in Cache Creek, Bear Creek, Sulphur Creek, and Harley Gulch. This Proposed Amendment was adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, on October 21, 2005. We reviewed the proposed actions to adopt methylmercury water quality objectives and mercury TMDLs for several creeks, and conclude they are consistent with federal regulations concerning water quality standards and TMDLs. We urge their adoption.

The Staff Report provides a thorough analysis of the proposed fish tissue objectives for methylmercury in Cache Creek, Bear Creek and Harley Gulch. The analysis is sound and the new objectives will be approvable upon submission to EPA. We support these objectives, which fully protect human health, wildlife, and federally listed threatened and endangered species such as the bald eagle. We understand the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service supports these objectives as protective of relevant threatened and endangered species living in and around the water bodies.

The proposed TMDLs for Cache Creek, Bear Creek and Harley Gulch contain all required TMDL elements, are technically sound and will be approvable upon submittal to EPA. The TMDLs will result in attainment of all applicable water quality standards.

We appreciate the State's hard work on these water quality standards and TMDLs and look forward to receiving the State's submittal following State Board adoption and OAL concurrence. If you have any questions concerning these comments, please call me at (415) 972-3572.

Sincerely yours,

*Alexis Strauss*  
Alexis Strauss  
Director, Water Division  
6 July 2006

202