Public Scoping Meetings for

PROPOSED STATEWIDE WATER CONTACT RECREATION BACTERIA OBJECTIVES AMENDMENTS TO WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLANS FOR INLAND SURFACE WATERS, ENCLOSED BAYS AND ESTUARIES AND THE OCEAN WATERS OF CALIFORNIA

(Proposed Amendments)

January 28, 2015 – Sacramento
February 10, 2015 – Costa Mesa
Purpose of Scoping Meetings

* Introduce the process of developing a statewide bacterial objective for contact recreation waters (REC1) in fresh and ocean waters

* To seek input from public agencies and members of the public on the range of project actions, alternatives, reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance, significant impacts to be analyzed, cumulative impacts if any, and mitigation measures.
Clean Water Act directs States (with U.S. EPA oversight) to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health and welfare

- State’s standards must include:
  - Designated Uses
  - Water Quality Criteria (Objectives in CA)
  - Antidegradation Policy
Clean Water Act direct U.S. EPA to promulgate standards when it determines that a new or revised standard is needed.

* In 2012 U.S. EPA issued their new recommended Recreational Water Criteria for Bacteria (2012 RWQC)
* The 2012 RWQC recommendations are for use by the states and tribes in adopting water quality standards
Most Regional Water Boards basin plans are not currently consistent with the 2012 RWQC.

The State Water Board staff is developing the Proposed Amendments to provide efficient and consistent implementation statewide.
The 2012 criteria document recommends:

* For Fresh Waters – E. coli and/or enterococci criteria with two sets of estimated illness rates
* For Marine Waters – Enterococci criteria with two sets of estimated illness rates
* Each criteria consists of a geometric mean limit and a Statistical Threshold Value not to be exceeded more than 10% of the time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria Elements</th>
<th>Estimated Illness Rate (NGI): 36 per 1,000 primary contact recreators</th>
<th>Estimated Illness Rate (NGI): 32 per 1,000 primary contact recreators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td><strong>Magnitude</strong></td>
<td><strong>Magnitude</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterococci – marine and fresh</td>
<td>GM (cfu/100 mL) 35  STV (cfu/100 mL) 130</td>
<td>OR GM (cfu/100 mL) 30  STV (cfu/100 mL) 110</td>
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<td>OR</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. coli - fresh</td>
<td>GM (cfu/100 mL) 126  STV (cfu/100 mL) 410</td>
<td>OR GM (cfu/100 mL) 100  STV (cfu/100 mL) 320</td>
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</tbody>
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NGI = NEEAR GI illness, NEEAR = National Epidemiological and Environmental Assessment of Recreational Water
GM = geometric mean  STV = statistical threshold value  cfu = colony forming units  mL = milliliters
Elements of Proposed Amendments

* 1 – Bacteria Indicators
* 2 – Level of Public Health Protection for Illness Rate
* 3 – Address Natural Sources
* 4 – High Flow Suspension of Objectives for Fresh Water
* 5 – Compliance Schedules and Interim Requirements
* 6 – Calculation of Effluent Limits for POTWs
* 7 – Mixing Zones for Point Sources
* 8 – Averaging Periods to Determine Compliance
* 9 – Effluent Monitoring and Reporting Frequency
* 10 – Analytical Methods to Measure Bacteria Indicators
* 11 – Allow for a Variance, Seasonal Suspension or Limited REC 1
Element 1: Bacteria Indicators (Fresh Waters)

- Leave existing bacteria indicators in place.
- Use only enterococci as an indicator organism.
- **Use only E. coli as an indicator organism.**
- Use both E. coli and enterococci as indicator organisms.
Element 1: Bacteria Indicators (Marine Waters)

* Leave existing bacteria indicators in place.
* Use enterococci as a sole indicator.
Element 2: Level of Public Health Protection for Illness Rate

- No action (status quo).
- Use the U.S. EPA’s Estimated Illness rate of 36 per 1,000.
- Use the U.S. EPA’s Estimated Illness rate of 32 per 1,000.
- Use an alternative Estimated Illness rate.
Element 3: Address Natural Sources of Bacteria Levels

- No action (status quo).

- Allow a reference system/antidegradation approach or natural sources exclusion approach.

- Prohibit the use of a reference system/antidegradation approach or natural sources exclusion approach.
Element 4: High Flow Suspension of Objectives for Fresh Waters

* No action (status quo).

* **Allow high flow suspension for non-engineered channels along with engineered flood control channels.**

* Affirmatively prohibit high flow suspension, but specifically provide that the Los Angeles Water Board, who already has a high flow suspension policy, may continue to use that policy.
Element 5: Compliance Schedules and Interim Requirements

- No action (status quo).

- Allow up to a ten-year compliance schedule to meet the new objectives for REC1 waters.
Element 6: Calculation of Effluent Limits for POTWs

* No action – Allow Regional Water Boards to specify the permit limits based on CDPH* guidelines for total coliform.

* Develop statewide guidance for calculating effluent limits based on effluent variability.

* Develop statewide guidance for applying the objective at the end of the pipe.

* CDPH = California Department of Public Health
Element 7: Mixing Zones for Point Sources

* No action (status quo).

* Allow mixing zones in a small area near an outfall.

* Do not allow mixing zones.
Element 8: Averaging Periods to Determine Compliance

* No action (status quo).

* Specify the geometric mean as a rolling average.

* Specify the appropriate averaging period.
Element 9: Effluent Monitoring and Reporting Frequency

* No action (status quo).

* Establish monitoring frequencies for all dischargers.

* Provide narrative guidance which can be used as guidelines to help establish monitoring frequencies in NPDES* permits.

* NPDES – National Pollutant Discharger Elimination System
Element 10: Analytical Methods to Measure Bacteria Indicators

* No action (status quo).

* Specify analytical methods for receiving waters and various effluents.
Element 11: Allow for a Variance, Seasonal Suspension or Limited REC1

* No Action (status quo).

* Encourage the designation of Limited REC1 waters where appropriate.

* Allow the use of a variance, seasonal suspension or Limited REC1.
Purpose of Scoping Meeting

- To obtain input on:
  - A range of project actions, alternatives
  - Reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance
  - Significant impacts to be analyzed
  - Cumulative impacts, if any
  - Mitigation measures
Environmental Checklist
Evaluate possible environmental impacts on the following categories

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture & Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology & Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use & Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population & Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities & Sewer Services
Written comments will be accepted until Noon on February 20, 2015

Addressed to:
Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
Comments

* Comments letters may be submitted by email to commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov
* Must be less than 15 megabytes in total size
* Or by fax at (916) 341-5620
* Note in subject line “Comment Letter – Statewide Bacteria Objectives – Scoping Comments”
Timeline

Initial Focus Group Outreach – April 2014 – July 2014
Scoping Document & Meeting – January/February 2015
Draft Staff Report – Summer 2015
Public Comment – Summer 2015
Public Hearing – Fall 2015
Comment Response - Winter 2015
Board Adoption – Spring 2016
Website

State Water Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/bacterialobjectives/

U.S.EPA 2012 criteria and other information: http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/standards/criteria/health/recreation/
Contacts

* Marine Waters
  * Michael Gjerde – Michael.Gjerde@waterboards.ca.gov

* Fresh Waters
  * Stephanie Rose – Stephanie.Rose@waterboards.ca.gov