TMDL Summary
San Luis Obispo Creek is on the 2010 Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired waters for nutrients. San Luis Obispo Creek’s nitrate-nitrogen levels exceed Basin Plan objectives for the protection of the municipal water supply beneficial use (MUN). Wastewater discharge, urban stormwater, and agriculture were identified as the primary sources of nutrients. The Central Coast Water Board adopted a TMDL for nutrients in San Luis Obispo Creek that went into effect August 2006.

The TMDL established a numeric target of 10 mg/L nitrate-N, equal to the existing Basin Plan water quality objective. The TMDL established an implementation plan to achieve the TMDL through the use of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, MS4 permits, and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for irrigated lands. The TMDL implementation schedule calls for achieving nutrient levels in San Luis Obispo Creek by 2012.

Water Quality Outcomes
- Water quality data demonstrate that the nitrate-N objectives are not being met in San Luis Obispo Creek.
- Water quality data for Prefumo Creek (310PRE), a San Luis Obispo Creek tributary, show significant improvement from 2002 to 2009.
- The City of San Luis Obispo NPDES permit will be revised to include a WRF discharge requirement to meet the TMDL nitrate-nitrogen numeric target.
- Continue implementation actions to reduce/eliminate nitrate-N loading from agriculture operations in the San Luis Obispo Creek watershed.
- Cal Poly recently enrolled in the stormwater program to achieve compliance with TMDL implementation actions.

San Luis Obispo Creek Watershed

Annual Nitrate-N Conditions by Source Category

Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) effluent discharge enters creek between stations 310PRE and 310 SLV. See Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) Website for additional water quality monitoring data.