



I am writing to provide comments on the Clear Lake Nutrient Control Program

I support efforts to improve water quality in Clear Lake and strongly support multiple avenues to achieve the goal with the highest priority the Middle Creek Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Project. Concerning the decision of the Board concerning the TMDL, I recommend a ten year extension of the compliance date, provided that significant milestones be established by the Board and attained by the responsible parties during that period of time.

An extension of the compliance deadline, together with clear statement by the Water Board on expectations for significant movement on the Middle Creek project and other efforts by responsible parties, will enable efforts to be focused on completion and implementation. Without an extension, I believe that considerable time and resources will end up being devoted to lawsuits rather than implementation—and thus delaying the actual improvement of water quality in Clear Lake.

I recommend that the Water Board also convene a meeting with the responsible parties to stress the importance of their individual and collective projects to achieve improvements in the Clear Lake Watershed. A clear statement that the Water Board is willing to work with responsible parties provided that active efforts are undertaken to fulfill their commitments and thereby bring about improvements in Clear Lake water quality.

Multiple avenues to improved water quality should be pursued. While I believe that the Middle Creek Project is a critical cornerstone, options like aeration, Tule mitigation and replanting, maintenance of septic systems, and similar actions should also be undertaken. Efforts should be guided by results of the ongoing water quality monitoring program.

In upstream agricultural areas, I suggest that the Water Board and Lake County reach out to the Natural Resources Conservation Service for assistance via the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for landowners to adopt suitable conservation practices to capture runoff before it leaves farm fields. EQIP assistance is only available to landowners, but the Water Board and County Board of Supervisors could highlight the availability of cost sharing assistance from NRCS.

Again, I recommend a ten year extension of the TMDL compliance deadline while also establishing significant milestones for completion during that period.

Thank you for opportunity to comment.

John Stierna

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