

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**

73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Public Notice No.7-20-30
September 2, 2020

**NOTICE OF CEQA SCOPING MEETING
IN THE MATTER OF A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE WATER
QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION
TO INCORPORATE TMDLS FOR ORGANOPHOSPHATE AND
ORGANOCHLORINE COMPOUNDS FOR IMPAIRED
IMPERIAL VALLEY WATERS, IMPERIAL COUNTY**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Colorado River Basin Water Board) staff will hold a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting to discuss the development of a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region ([Basin Plan](#)). The project would incorporate Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for organophosphate and organochlorine compounds that impair Imperial Valley waters into Chapter 4 of the Basin Plan (Project).

The TMDLs will affect surface waters in the Imperial Valley. This area comprises approximately 480,000 acres, most of it is irrigated agricultural land in Imperial County. The principal communities in the Imperial Valley are Brawley, Calexico, El Centro, and Imperial. The TMDLs will also affect the Salton Sea, as most of the impaired waters are its tributaries.

This scoping meeting will provide participants with: (1) an opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the “functionally equivalent” environmental document to be prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.5 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15251(g); and (2) an opportunity to comment on the proposed scope of the Basin Plan amendment

The CEQA scoping meeting will be held at the following date and time, **by video and teleconference only**:

Date: September 23, 2020
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom Video and
Teleconference

As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and the Governor’s Executive Orders to protect public health by limiting public gathering and requiring social distancing, the meeting will occur solely via remote presence. Links for the meeting, including a phone call option, will be posted on the Colorado River Basin Water Board’s website at: [Colorado River Basin Water Board Home Page](#).

BACKGROUND

The Colorado River Basin Region's Basin Plan designates water quality standards for water bodies, which consist of beneficial uses and water quality objectives that are set to protect those beneficial uses. The Alamo River, Imperial Valley Drains, New River, and Wiest Lake in the Imperial Valley are polluted by organophosphate (OP) and organochlorine (OC) compounds that are toxic to aquatic life, which is in violation of the Basin Plan water quality objectives for toxicity and chemical constituents. Surface waters identified as impaired are placed on the federal Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired waters and scheduled for the development of TMDLs. This Project would address impairments of OP and OC compounds in the Alamo River, Imperial Valley Drains, New River, and Wiest Lake through the development of TMDLs for these pollutants.

OP and OC compounds are currently used or were historically used in Imperial Valley but persist in the environment. The current-use pollutants that will be addressed in the TMDLs are the OP compounds chlorpyrifos, diazinon, and malathion. These compounds are pesticides. To control these compounds in the environment and lead to attainment of water quality standards, it is expected that one or a combination of the following will be used: reduced use, switching to other safer pesticides, and/or enhanced pesticide management practices.

The legacy pollutants historically used and that will be addressed in the TMDLs are the OC compounds chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and toxaphene. Chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, and toxaphene are pesticides, and PCBs are electrical insulators. OC compounds have similar chemical and physical characteristics. In the environment, they degrade slowly, are hydrophobic, and have a tendency to attach to sediment particles. To control the discharge/runoff of these compounds into Imperial Valley waters and lead to attainment of water quality standards, sediment management practices are expected to be used.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the scoping meeting is for Colorado River Basin Water Board staff to seek input from public agencies and members of the public on the range of Project actions and alternatives, reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance, significant and cumulative impacts, and mitigation measures. Scoping may also assist the Colorado River Basin Water Board in resolving concerns of affected federal, state, and local agencies and other interested persons. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3775.5.)

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS

The Colorado River Basin Water Board will accept both written and oral comments. Staff will solicit oral comments at the CEQA scoping meeting. Additionally, interested persons may submit written comments to Logan Raub via email at Logan.Raub@waterboards.ca.gov or by mail to 73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100, Palm Desert, CA 92260. Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on **October 2, 2020**. Electronic submission by email is preferred. Please indicate in the subject line "Comment Letter – CEQA Scoping for Imperial Valley OP and OC Compounds TMDLs."

Colorado River Basin Water Board staff will not prepare written responses to comments received at this meeting or to written comments submitted. However, Colorado River Basin Water Board staff will address all significant environmental impacts in the draft and final environmental documents.

ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE NEEDS

Individuals who require special accommodations or interpreter services to participate in this meeting, should contact Mary Castaneda at (760) 776-8945 or via email Mary.Castaneda@waterboards.ca.gov at least ten (10) days prior the scheduled meeting to notify us that you will be utilizing these services.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding the CEQA scoping meeting, please contact Mr. Logan Raub at (760) 776-8966.

Please bring the foregoing to the attention of anyone you believe may be interested in this matter.