Comment Summary and Reponses
Revised Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL and Site Specific Objectives
Comments due: September 18, 2014

Commenters:

1	Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County
2	California Assemblymember Scott Wilk
3	California Senator Steve Knight
4	United Water Conservation District
5	Ventura County Agricultural Water Coalition
6	Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment
7	Friends of the Santa Clara River
8	Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce
9	Valley Industry Association
10	SCVOneWater
11	Newhall County Water District
12	Maria A. Gutzeit
13	Upper Santa Clara River Integrated Regional Water Management Group
14	Edwin and Joan Dunn
15	Affordable Clean Water Alliance

Comment Summary and Responses:

1.1	The District strongly supports the proposed Basin Plan amendment and revisions to the TMDL and SSOs, which would benefit the community and local businesses of the Santa Clarita while fully protecting water quality and the designated beneficial uses of the Santa Clara River, including salt-sensitive agriculture in Reach 4(b). Regional Board approval of the SSOs would allow implementation of a smaller, less costly compliance project with reduced construction impacts, in large part due to the avoided construction of the reverse osmosis permeate pipeline from Valencia WRP to Saugus WRP, and reduced electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Lastly,	Comment noted.

	the extension of the compliance schedule and interim waste load allocations to July 1, 2019 are critically important to allow the District sufficient time for design, construction and startup of the chloride compliance project. As described in Appendix B to the Staff Report, the length of the time extension is the minimum practical duration needed to design, construct and startup the facilities being built by the District for compliance with the TMDL. The District has been approached by two major water agencies in the Santa Clarita Valley, who have suggested that this chloride compliance project will be a starting point toward increased local water sustainability as the project's advanced treatment processes are compatible with potential groundwater recharge projects that could be conducted in partnership with the water agencies. The District would be eager to pursue future cooperative projects with the water agencies, in an effort to ultimately realize water supply benefits in addition to chloride compliance from this project. Furthermore, this project and the proposed Basin Plan amendment are consistent with the goals of SCV One Water, a local, nonprofit group, such as fostering collaboration and consensus among multiple local and regulatory agencies and developing an overarching vision for water resources management in the Santa Clarita Valley.	
1.2	The District fully supports and urges the Board to adopt the proposed Basin Plan Amendment. The District respectfully submits a few suggested edits to the Regional Board staff's excellent work on the tentative resolution and related documents, which can be found in the Attachment.	Revisions have been made consistent with the proposed edits.
2.1 and 3.1	I support the proposed Basin Plan amendment, which will ensure that the Santa Clarita Valley will be able to comply with the USCR Chloride TMDL, and will benefit the residents and businesses of the City of Santa Clarita and surrounding communities, the Santa Clara River Watershed, and the Santa Clarita Valley (SCV) Sanitation District. The proposed revision to the TMDL schedule is essential to provide the time necessary for the SCV Sanitation District to construct the new treatment facilities that will allow the Santa Clarita Valley to comply with the TMDL's	Comment noted.

	provisions, which is expected to cost over $100 million upfront and $4.1 million in annual operating costs. This change in the schedule is vital to ensure that the Santa Clarita Valley does not incur fines while the project is under construction. The proposed site-specific objectives will ensure that the project makes efficient use of public funds, while remaining to fully protect water quality and beneficial uses. I also support these Basin Plan and TMDL amendments because they will assist efforts underway in the Santa Clarita Valley by water agencies, the SCV Sanitation District, the business community and other stakeholders to pursue water recycling opportunities and increase local water sustainability.	
4.1	The project proponent must be held accountable for compliance with the proposed project schedule. As the RWQCB and its staff are aware, this project proponent is requesting a four year project timeline extension. It is important to recognize that the request for a project timeline extension is not the result of unforeseen circumstances or technical complications, but rather *a lack of political will to comply with earlier project timelines*. Directors of Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles) (Sanitation District) elected to NOT proceed with the approved TMDL compliance project even after receiving stakeholder support (no majority protest) for the necessary funding via the Proposition 218 process. Two separate Proposition 218 notices were mailed out and despite their efforts to "encourage" voters to say NO to proposed rate increases to fund the Alternative Water Resources Management project (AWRM), they never received the required majority protest. Even after the RWQCB issued a penalty of $280,250 (which was negotiated down to $225,000), the Sanitation District did not expedite their compliance efforts. The penalty was less costly than compliance, consequently, the TMDL compliance project was further delayed.	The Regional Board agrees that the request for a project timeline extension is not being made because of unforeseen circumstances or technical complications. The information in this comment regarding the causes of the delay in TMDL implementation is included in the draft staff report (pp. 6, 10-11) and tentative resolution (findings 19-27). The Regional Board took enforcement actions against SCVSD for not completing TMDL implementation tasks by required deadlines. Following the Board's enforcement actions, SCVSD approved a final chloride compliance plan in accordance with the terms of a settlement agreement. Now, through this action, the Board is endeavoring to make revisions to the TMDL that will facilitate SCVSD's implementation of the TMDL requirements; these revisions include an extension of the implementation schedule by four years in order provide the time that will be necessary to implement the chloride compliance plan approved by SCVSD.

4.2	Most recently, the Sanitation District is asking to add an additional four years to the project timeline and has included in the justification for the extension a proposed project timeline that includes items such as *3 years* for the design of the UV treatment facility. UWCD and the Ventura County stakeholders it represents question why the design phase takes so long. The UV technology proposed by the Sanitation District is routine and is commonly found in similar types of facilities across California, and for that matter, the U.S. The liberal amount of time required for just this phase of the project falls directly in line with previous Sanitation District actions – delay (and the associated penalties) is cheaper than compliance. UWCD is concerned that the brine disposal option (deep well injection [DWI]) offers the Sanitation District additional opportunities for project delay. It is not until 2016 that the evaluation program for the test well will be completed and the Sanitation District will then learn if the DWI disposal technology will be effective and permittable for this project. If DWI is not effective, then the project will be further delayed as a new disposal methodology is vetted.	Staff reviewed the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Schedule Justification report submitted by SCVSD. According to the report, the 34-month schedule includes time to evaluate multiple UV technologies, possibly conduct on-site pilot testing, establish operating parameters within limited space requirements and considering staging requirements, and potential evaluation of new tertiary filters. While the proposed design schedule for UV facilities is longer than expected, the report does provide other examples of County Sanitation District projects that include design phases with an average length of 34 months, which is in line with the 36 months requested for the proposed Upper Santa Clara River project. However, on-site pilot testing may not be necessary for UV or RO facility design as stated in the report. In response to the second part of this comment, according to statements made by SCVSD staff at meetings during the development of the proposed TMDL revisions, the proposed implementation schedule and interim deadlines factor in potential delays in WRP upgrades as a result of evaluation of brine disposal options. Thus, even if SCVSD determines that brine disposal via deep well injection is not a viable option, the Regional Board does not foresee this as a justification for an extension to the final implementation deadline.
4.3	UWCD is concerned the proposed modifications to the Basin Plan are *not protective to groundwater resource quality in the Piru basin* (Reaches 4A and 4B). The proposed surface water site specific objective for chloride in Reach 4B is 100 mg/L. However, the proposed Basin Plan modifications fail to acknowledge the *historical discharge of waters with elevated chloride concentrations into the USCR that is (and has been) negatively impacting downstream beneficial use*. A legacy plume of groundwater with chloride	The Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is required to address the water quality impairments in Reaches 5 and 6 that are identified on the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List, and to ensure that downstream surface water quality is also protected. A TMDL is a federal regulatory tool to restore surface water quality; it is not the appropriate tool to address

	concentrations approximately 150% of background is now migrating down gradient through the Piru basin. This salt loading is having water quality and fiscal impacts on downstream disadvantaged communities. The wastewater treatment plant (Ventura County Waterworks District No. 16) that serves the disadvantaged community of Piru has received a Notice of Violation (NOV) from the RWQCB that is a result, at least in part, of the elevated chloride concentrations in groundwater served by their water purveyor. The well field used by the purveyor is within the Reach 4A area impacted by Sanitation District past wastewater disposal practices. The stakeholders served by that wastewater reclamation facility already pay disposal rates significantly above those in the Sanitation District service area and may soon have to take on additional expenses to address the NOV. The SSO of 100 mg/L for surface water in Reach 4B is contributing to the degradation of groundwater quality in other downstream reaches of the Piru basin.	historically impacted groundwater basins. The 2008 Chloride TMDL was a special case in which implementation of the AWRM Program would have allowed SCVSD to discharge chloride at higher concentrations to surface water if it exported chloride out of the Piru Basin downstream, resulting in a net reduction in chloride loading in the watershed. Since AWRM is no longer a compliance option, SCVSD must meet the existing water quality objective of 100 mg/L for Reach 4B. The Board agrees that past and current discharges of chloride at concentrations above 100 mg/L have impacted the Piru Basin. However the Board disagrees that, once attained, chloride concentrations at the water quality objective of 100 mg/L in Reach 4B will contribute to the degradation of groundwater quality in Piru basin.
4.4	UWCD is supportive of the Sanitation District program to come into compliance with the Chloride TMDL, however, based on past performance, we urge the RWQCB to establish firm project milestones and significant penalties if those milestones are not achieved. In fact, the RWQCB should encourage a shorter timeline for compliance than the four (4) years being requested. Every month that goes by results in continual salt loading into Ventura County that the Sanitation District is now washing its hands of the responsibility to fund any clean-up efforts. Project delays encouraged by penalties that are less expensive than compliance are no longer a viable scenario for the groundwater and surface water resource stakeholders of Ventura County.	The Regional Board agrees that there should be firm, enforceable interim milestones and significant penalties if those milestones are not achieved. As a result, the TMDL implementation schedule contains regular milestones at one to 10-month intervals with concrete deliverables that will be incorporated into NPDES permits and which will be enforceable.
5.1	On behalf of the Ventura County Agricultural Water Quality Coalition we are pleased to join in the comment letter submitted today by the United Water Conservation District. (A true and correct copy is attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein.)	Comment noted. Please see responses to the UWCD comments.

5.2	The Water Quality Coalition has been a long-standing stakeholder in the chloride TMDL implementation process and is concerned by the project delay and schedule compliance sought by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation Districts. It is unfortunate that the Sanitation Districts are now benefitting from their own lack of political will to comply with the earlier product timelines set forth in the Board's Chloride TMDL Implementation Plan. I refer specifically to its rejection of constituent support in the Prop 218 process which would have provided the Districts with sufficient funding to go forward with the earlier project four years ago! Now, because of the District's recalcitrance, they are requesting an additional four years to the project timeline. They are asserting as the justification for extension of the proposed project timeline that three years are needed for the ***design*** of the UV treatment facility. As noted by the United Water Conservation District, "The UV technology proposed by the Sanitation Districts is routine and is commonly found in similar types of facilities across California and for that matter, the U.S. The liberal amount of time required for just this phase of the project falls directly in line with previous Sanitation Districts actions- - delay (and the associated penalties) [which] is cheaper than compliance."	The Regional Board took enforcement actions against SCVSD for not completing TMDL implementation tasks by required deadlines., Now, through this action, the Board is endeavoring to make revisions to the TMDL that will facilitate SCVSD's implementation of the TMDL requirements; these revisions include an extension of the implementation schedule by four years in order provide the time that will be necessary to implement the chloride compliance plan approved by SCVSD. . Staff reviewed the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Schedule Justification report submitted by SCVSD. While the proposed design schedule for UV facilities is longer than expected, the report does provide other examples of County Sanitation District projects that include design phases with an average length of 34 months, which is in line with the 36 months requested for the proposed Upper Santa Clara River project. However, on-site pilot testing may not be necessary for UV or RO facility design as stated in the report.
5.3	We further request that should the Board grant the Sanitation Districts' request for the additional four-year term to complete the project, it include firm project milestones and significant monetary penalties if those milestones are not achieved within the amended Chloride TMDL Implementation Plan.	The Regional Board agrees that there should be firm, enforceable interim milestones and significant penalties if those milestones are not achieved. As a result, the TMDL implementation schedule contains regular milestones at one to 10-month intervals with concrete deliverables that will be incorporated into NPDES permits and which will be enforceable.
5.4	The Water Quality Coalition specifically objects to the four-year time line and believes that the Board should encourage the Sanitation Districts to establish a shorter timeline for compliance.	The proposed four-year schedule extension is based on review of the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Schedule Justification report submitted by SCVSD by Regional Board staff. Please also see response to comment 4.2.

5.5	The Water Quality Coalition appreciates the opportunity to submit its comments to this proposed project and sincerely hopes that the Board will seek to achieve the correct balance between achieving the project milestones and protecting the beneficial uses of downstream stakeholders.	Comment noted.
6.1	SCOPE has consistently commented on this issue since the late '90s when the reaches in question for this amendment were first placed on the 303d list. We have participated in stakeholders groups, appeared at public hearings and written extensive comment letters, both to this Board and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts in an effort to ensure that the Santa Clara River and its beneficial uses are protected as required by the Clean Water Act.	The Regional Board appreciates SCOPE's ongoing participation and advocacy.
6.2	We begin our comments by stating that we are extremely discouraged with this process and the Board's failure to reach a final resolution on the matter. Instead, both the time for completion has been extended and the levels of the TMDL have been weakened. The Sanitation District has filed lawsuits instead of attempting to comply in an efficient and cost effective manner. They dragged their feet over producing an EIR and even now have released a supplemental EIR for an issue that should have been covered by the original document, thus once again slowing down the process. It seems that the Board has bought into this delay tactic. Instead of finding ways to encourage compliance, the have allowed these delay tactics to impede the final resolution of this matter and, ultimately, the reduction of salt in the Santa Clara River.	The Regional Board took enforcement actions against SCVSD for not completing TMDL implementation tasks by required deadlines. Now, through this action, the Board is endeavoring to make revisions to the TMDL that are fully protective of the most sensitive beneficial use of the Santa Clara River and will facilitate SCVSD's implementation of the TMDL requirements. To accomplish this, these revisions include an extension of the implementation schedule by four years in order provide the time that will be necessary to implement the final chloride compliance plan approved by SCVSD on July 7, 2014. According to the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Schedule Justification report submitted by SCVSD, project implementation will begin in October 2014 and has not been impacted by the release of a supplemental EIR.
6.3	As you all are probably aware, the environmental community did not dispute the findings on the effect of salts on habitat and the Santa Clara River, although, clearly studies were done only on adult species, and not done on impacts to needed habitat, reproduction or effects on juveniles, eggs, etc. We did not object to this because we felt the compromise made with the farmers of 117 mgL on an instantaneous basis was sufficient protection. Now the	The proposed revision requires lower, not higher levels of chloride than were allowed by the 2008 Upper Santa River Chloride TMDL. The 2008 TMDL conditionally allowed 150 mg/L in Reaches 5 and 6, expressed as a 12-month rolling average. During the development and adoption of the 2008 TMDL, the Regional Board

	Board proposes 150 mgL on a rolling average, which could allow considerably higher levels of chlorides. When will these higher levels occur? Will they affect viability of fish and amphibian eggs if the occur in the breeding season? On what grounds has the Board agreed to this higher level of salt and extension of time? Will such an increased level affect dischargers' ability to meet the required 117 or 100 mg. Or are neither of these levels being abandoned?	concluded that these levels were protective of the aquatic life beneficial use, including threatened and endangered species and their food sources. The revisions proposed will require lower, not higher, levels of chloride than in the 2008 TMDL. The proposed revisions allow for 150 mg/L expressed as a 3-month average in Reach 6 and in the few hundred yards of Reach 5 above the Valencia WRP. In developing the proposed revisions, the Regional Board required SCVSD to conduct numerous model runs using the GWSI model to ensure that an objective of 100 mg/L as a 3-month average would be attained downstream of the WRPs. The proposed revised TMDL assigns the Valencia WRP a variable waste load allocation (WLA) less than 100 mg/L as a 3-month rolling average, which would allow the Saugus WRP to discharge up to 150 mg/L as a 3-month rolling average, while still meeting the numeric target of 100 mg/L as a three-month rolling average immediately downstream of the Valencia WRP. The proposed TMDL revisions include interim milestones to ensure that the facilities needed to attain flow-weighted WLAs are constructed in time for the Saugus and Valencia WRPs to attain final WLAs.
6.4	How will this affect other permits issued in reach 5, i.e. the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District permit and the WDR for Newhall Ranch recently issued? How will these be enforceable if you allow other dischargers a higher limit?	Under the proposal, the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District and other NPDES-permitted dischargers, including any future dischargers, in the watershed are assigned a WLA equal to 100 mg/L as a 3-month average. Language is included in the TMDL that ensures that this WLA will be directly incorporated into the NPDES permit for the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District and will be enforceable.

6.5	We understand that there is a new proposal to re-water the upper reaches of the river with some of the sanitation district effluent. Such a proposal has merit in that it could improve both water supply and habitat in the upper river. This might be a reason to allow some change to reach 6 of the river to accommodate such a project. But without any firm proposal and commitment to such a plan, we see no reason why the Board should now be weakening the chloride TMDL for the benefit of a party that has made every effort to avoid compliance.	The proposed revisions do not allow for a decrease in water quality in Reach 6 as compared to the AWRM program under the 2008 TMDL. Please see response to comment No. 6.3. Further, while the Regional Board supports integrated water resources approaches that address water quality and have water supply benefits, the sole regulatory purpose of the proposed revisions is to fully protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River and ensure that water quality standards are attained.
6.6	One last note, it appears from your maps that reach 5 is below the Valencia plant, while the notice for this project states that is above the Valencia plant. Please clarify this issue.	The Valencia WRP is located within Reach 5, a few hundred yards downstream of the reach break. The language in the notice is intended to clarify that we are only proposing a site-specific objective for the portion of Reach 5 that is above the Valencia WRP. This was done to accommodate the "flow-weighting" approach that is discussed in the TMDL and in response to comment 6.3. Flow weighting means that discharges of effluent from the Saugus WRP (in Reach 6) can be permitted to have chloride concentrations up to 150 mg/L as a 3-month average, but that chloride concentrations in effluent discharges from the Valencia WRP will vary based on the discharge quality of the Saugus WRP, always remaining under 100 mg/L as a 3-month average, such that the combined flow-weighted concentration of chloride discharged from the two WRPs always meets the water quality objective of 100 mg/L as a 3-month average downstream of the Valencia WRP.

7.1	Friends of the Santa Clara River, having spent years supporting the chloride TMDL process, have to register our disappointment that implementation is once more being postponed for several years. We believe that this has been a difficult and thorny issue but also believe that its resolution must not be indefinitely postponed.	The Regional Board agrees that the issue must not be indefinitely postponed. The proposed TMDL revisions include a four-year implementation schedule with enforceable, interim milestones and concrete deliverables to ensure that SCVSD stays on track with TMDL implementation.
7.2	We are also disappointed to see the allowable levels of chloride increased. We have generally been supportive of the levels established to date, including the 117 mg/L level for crop protection, but are concerned that allowing a 150 mg/L rolling average could well lead to problems downstream and that this level is not supported by analysis.	The levels of chloride are not being allowed to increase in the way that the comment is stated and the proposed revisions are supported by extensive analysis. Please see response to comment 6.3 for a further explanation.
7.3	We are also concerned about how increasing the level will affect other permits, especially, that for Newhall Ranch. How will this permit be enforced?	Under the proposal, the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District and other NPDES-permitted dischargers, including any future dischargers, in the watershed are assigned a WLA equal to 100 mg/L as a 3-month average. Language is included in the TMDL that ensures that this WLA will be directly incorporated into the NPDES permit for the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District and will be enforceable.
7.4	We support the proposed concept of re-watering the upper reaches of the river with some of the sanitation district effluent. Implementation of this proposal could partially offset the effects of increased chloride limits, but of course this is just a proposal and would only be advantageous if tied somehow to the new proposed limit.	The proposed revisions do not allow for a decrease in water quality in Reach 6 as compared to the AWRM program under the 2008 TMDL. Please see response to comment No. 6.3. Further, while the Regional Board supports integrated water resources approaches that address water quality and have water supply benefits, the sole regulatory purpose of the proposed revisions is to fully protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River and ensure that water quality standards are attained.

8.1 9.1	We strongly support the proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Los Angeles Region to revise the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride Total Maximum Daily Load (USCR Chloride TMDL) and to incorporate new site specific objectives (SSOs) for chloride for the Upper Santa Clara River. We are particularly pleased to support these Basin Plan and TMDL amendments, as they will help advance our efforts to develop local water sustain ability in the Santa Clarita Valley by managing our precious water resources in a holistic manner. The Basin Plan amendment is an essential part of our water sustainability efforts, which will benefit the entire Santa Clara River Watershed and the residents, businesses, environment and economic health of the Santa Clarita Valley.	Comment noted.
8.2 9.2	We support the averaging of chloride concentrations over a three-month period and the flow-weighting between the Valencia and Saugus Water Reclamation Plants, both of which fully protect water quality and beneficial uses in the Santa Clara River, including downstream salt-sensitive agriculture. The proposed schedule extension is essential to provide the time needed for the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District to construct the new advanced treatment facilities that will allow the Santa Clarita Valley to comply with the Chloride TMDL for the Upper Santa Clara River.	Comment noted.
8.3 9.3	We are working closely with business, industry and water leaders in the Santa Clarita Valley through the non-profit organization Santa Clarita Valley One Water to maximize efficient use of the SC Valley's water resources. The proposed Basin Plan and chloride TMDL amendments will help advance the goals of Santa Clarita Valley One Water, which seeks to foster collaboration and consensus between the private sector and local, regional and state agencies, including the State and Regional Water Boards, in order to put in place a plan for wise management of the Santa Clarita Valley's water resources. This includes achieving the greatest possible use of the high-quality treated water that will be produced as a result of the SC Valley's chloride compliance project. We believe that the water to be produced through the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District's advanced treatment processes will also be useful for future groundwater recharge projects currently being studied in partnership with our local water agencies.	Comment noted.

10.1	SCVOneWater is working closely with the agencies to maximize the efficient use of our water. This proposed Basin Plan Amendment will help advance the goals of SCVOneWater, which is seeking to foster collaboration and consensus between the private sector and local and state agencies, including the Regional Board, in order to put in place a plan for holistic and sustainable management of the Santa Clarita Valley's water resources. This will include the ability to utilize and recycle the high-quality treated water that will be produced as a result of the LA County Sanitation District's compliance project.	Comment noted.
10.2	We support the technical comments made by the Upper Santa Clara River-Regional Water Management Group (USCR RWMG) providing for appropriate changes to the Basin Plan, which will ensure the Santa Clarita Valley's water supply portfolio is most cost-effectively, efficiently and reliably put to the beneficial use in an environmentally sound manner.	Comment noted. Please see responses to specific comments made by the USCR RWMG (comment 13.1 – 13.4).
11.1	The Newhall County Water District (NCWD) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Proposed Basin Plan Amendments. The proposed Basin Plan amendments are seen by NCWD and SCV Stakeholders as an opportunity to advance the local use of recycled water. As you are aware, the region views recycled water as a vital local resource. In support of advancing the use of recycled water, the USCR RWMG has undertaken the preparation of a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan to facilitate the development of recycled water. As the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board considers adjustments to the basin plan objectives to implement the SCVSD's chloride compliance solutions, we recommend strongly the Board take this opportunity to amend the basin plan in a manner which will facilitate local water reuse. This will help to promote regional independence from imported water supplies, move toward assuring future water availability and optimizing existing infrastructure investments in the Santa Clarita Valley while supporting State Policy objectives which include increasing recycled water use.	The request is outside of the scope of the proposed amendments. The purpose of the proposed amendments is to facilitate SCVSD's implementation of TMDL requirements, in a cost effective manner, after resolving previous delays in implementation through enforcement actions.. Please also see response to comment 13.4.
11.2	Please consider the technical comments the USCR RWMG have provided in making the appropriate changes to the Basin Plan, which will facilitate local water reuse.	Comment noted. Please see responses to specific comments made by the USCR RWMG (comments 13.1 – 13.4).

11.3	NCWD requests the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) move the public hearing for the Basin Plan Amendment to a location in the Santa Clarita Valley to enhance public input and make participation more convenient.	A range of items is on the Board's agenda each month; often items may be of interest to stakeholders from different parts of the Region. Due to this, and the fact that the board meeting venue is generally decided months in advance and usually before the month's agenda is finalized, it is not possible to arrange venues based on a single agenda item.
11.4	NCWD is focused on ensuring the Basin Plan update will be consistent with State Water Code Section 13241, which requires the RWQCB to consider the need to develop and use recycled water when establishing water quality objectives. The Basin Plan amendment as proposed does not fully recognize the development of this resource.	The Regional Board considered the factors identified in California Water Code section 13241 when adopting the proposed revisions. SCVSD prepared a report containing analysis of the factors identified in section 13241, which is included as Attachment C to the staff report. The analysis showed that the proposed SSOs, including their averaging periods, will not cause any reduction in the amount of recycled water available for use in the Santa Clarita Valley and will support objectives of the Castaic Lake Water Agency's (CLWA) 2010 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). The UWMP projects that water demand in the area will continue to increase, and that additional sources of water including recycled water will be necessary to meet projected demand. The proposed SSOs are consistent with the secondary MCLs in Title 22 and will not result in chloride concentrations that exceed these levels. However, without the proposed SSOs, additional advanced treatment would be required, leading to the potential loss of up to 0.13 MGD of available recycled water supplies (if all water was recycled) to brine disposal via deep well injection.
11.5	NCWD supports the proposed amendments to the Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region contained in the staff report and requests that new conditional SSOs for surface water in Reach 7 be amended to be consistent with Reaches 5 and 6, to revise surface water objectives for TDS and sulfate in Reach 7, and to revise groundwater objectives for TDS and sulfate in Santa Clara-Mint Canyon and Santa Clara-Bouquet, San Francisquito basins.	The requested changes are outside of the scope of the proposed amendment. See response to comment 13.4.

11.6	Based on information contained in the 2008 Staff Report, NCWD believes a twelve (12) month rolling average for chloride discharges in Reaches 4B, 5 and 6 would allow for dilution in wet years to help meet the required chloride reduction but would not impair downstream waters. The downstream beneficial uses rely overwhelming on groundwater and significant time between discharge from the Valencia Water Reclamation Plant and the use of the groundwater in Ventura County, where the water will be used for salt sensitive crops, would permit for dilution of chlorides in the groundwater to meet the 100 mg/L standard. For these reasons, NCWD requests a twelve (12) month rolling average for chloride in Reaches, 4B, 5 and 6. In addition, the twelve (12) month rolling average for chloride in Reaches, 4B, 5 and 6 would decrease the volume of water requiring treatment allowing for greater use of recycled water.	The objective for chloride in Reach 4B is applied as a 3-month average to protect salt-sensitive agriculture in the area of Reach 4B. The Literature Review and Evaluation (LRE) supplemental study recommended a 3-month averaging period for salt-sensitive crops. The averaging period for the chloride objectives in Reaches 5 and 6 must be at least as protective as a 3-month average because they flow into Reach 4B. Modeling runs using the GSWI model predict that the additional water inputs between the WRPs and Reach 4B would *not* provide enough dilution to ensure that the water quality objective of 100 mg/L as a 3-month average would be met at all times in Reach 4B if the objectives in Reaches 5 and 6 had longer averaging periods.
11.7	The 2008 Staff Report, states "the work to date provides sufficient information on the chloride hazard threshold for sensitive crops" and "the Literature Review and Evaluation (LRE) provided a scientifically defensible baseline to support a Water Quality Objective (WQO) of 117 milligrams per liter (mg/L) that is protective of agricultural supply beneficial use (AGR)." Based on this assessment, NCWD request a drought relief chloride discharge limit of 117 mg/L in Reaches 4B and 5. Consistent with the 2008 Staff Report, this discharge limit would be in effect when the chloride levels at Castaic Lake exceed 80 mg/L. The discharge limit would revert back to the 100 mg/L standard when the chloride levels at Castaic Lake drop below 80 mg/L. NCWD looks forward to continuing to work with the RWQCB to ensure we not only meet regional discharge limits in the most technologically efficient and cost-effective manner, but we also do so in a way that promotes the development of the SCV's water reuse program.	The 2008 TMDL required that an equal amount of salt be exported from the watershed during non-drought conditions to compensate for any excursions above the water quality objective during drought conditions. Such an implementation scenario is no longer being pursued.
12.1	Thank you for the opportunity to comment on water issues facing our valley. I am Vice President of Newhall County Water District (NCWD) and have been elected to serve our customers since 2003, but these comments are submitted on my own behalf only. I completely support the separate comments submitted by NCWD on this issue.	Comment noted. Please see responses to comments submitted by the Newhall County Water District.

12.2	The meeting notice was not available, as of 9/18/14, on the RWQCB page under "Announcements" or under "Board Info /Meetings." I am concerned the general public would not have found the meeting notice that seems to be only listed under "Board Decisions/Basin Plan Amendments." I had to obtain the link from our Newhall County Water District general manager and I got the meeting notice (though I have commented on the matter multiple times) only through a realtor friend. I don't think the notice was well distributed.	The Notice of Hearing and Opportunity to Comment on the proposed Basin Plan amendment was posted to the Regional Board's website on the TMDL page on August 4, 2014. The Notice of Hearing and Opportunity to Comment was also e-mailed to 727 people on the Regional Board's electronic mailing list and 35 people on the postal mailing list. The Notice of Public Board Meeting for the October 9, 2014 meeting will be posted on the Regional Board's website at least 10 days before the meeting. At that time, the notice and agenda will be posted under "Announcements" on the home page and on the "Board Info/Meetings" page. Members of the public will have an opportunity to comment at the public hearing on October 9.
12.3	Also, a Sanitation District staff member commented at our August 28th Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) meeting that RWQCB was "going to change the meeting location to Simi Valley." The most appropriate place for the meeting is Santa Clarita or, at minimum, the location in the notice. It should not be held in Simi Valley, which is not even in our watershed.	A range of items is on the Board's agenda each month; often items may be of interest to stakeholders from different parts of the Region. Due to this, and the fact that the board meeting venue is generally decided months in advance and usually before the month's agenda is finalized, it is not possible to arrange venues based on a single agenda item.
12.4	I find it regrettable that water suppliers and other interested parties were not included in discussions of the proposed TMDL modifications. The Sanitation District indicated that they have been meeting with RWQCB staff since November 2013. The water agencies and the IRWMP group were not invited or informed of these discussions. The viability of the Santa Clarita Valley's water supply depends on all parties having a seat at the table. TMDLs affect drinking water well operations, water recycling, stormwater management and water recharge as well as water supply, habitat, property values, and business operations. I am encouraging the IRWMP group to work together better in the future to save ratepayer money on studies and also to accomplish multiple goals with our water. I hope that RWQCB will also insist upon multiple goals for water quality and water supply decisions.	The TMDL revisions are being proposed at the request of the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (SCVSD), the primary discharger to the Upper Santa Clara River. The purpose of the proposed revisions is to fully protect the most sensitive beneficial use, salt-sensitive agriculture, of the Upper Santa Clara River by ensuring that chloride water quality objectives protective of this use are attained. The revisions are also meant to facilitate SCVSD's implementation of TMDL requirements, in a cost effective manner, after resolving previous delays in implementation through enforcement actions. Given this reason for the revisions, the Regional Board did not find it necessary to engage

		water agencies outside of soliciting comments on the proposed revisions through the Notice of Hearing and Opportunity to Comment that was circulated on August 4, 2014.
12.5	I ask that RWQCB take as broad a view as they can at this TMDL hearing to help expedite water reuse and efficient use of public funds. Where possible, please include a pathway in this basin plan amendment for other reaches in the upper watershed to set flexible TMDLs to promote recharge.	The Regional Board has a long history of integrating water quality and water supply goals and often includes provisions in TMDLs that encourage integrated approaches to TMDL implementation. However, the defining characteristic of a TMDL is that it restores polluted surface waterbodies such that they attain water quality standards. In this case, the Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is required to address the water quality impairments in Reaches 5 and 6 that are identified on the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List, and to ensure that downstream surface water quality is also protected. The request to revise objectives for other reaches not subject to the TMDL is outside of the scope of the TMDL and the proposed amendments, which are intended to facilitate SCVSD's implementation of TMDL requirements.
12.6	In general, I support the changes proposed by SCVSD but feel they left out many considerations that would have benefited local water resource management. Items 27 and 41 in the resolution discuss a 3-month averaging and additional requests made by SCVSD. The public and water entities were not consulted on the 3-month averaging or on the modeling study (Appendix A of the staff report.) The modeling would have been more useful if it also studied other averaging periods, such as 6 month or 12 months. This would have been helpful to see if variability from drought or recycling or other inputs would interfere with project goals. A pathway to consider longer averaging periods should be provided to facilitate cost effective water reuse and recharge.	This comment and other comments on the proposed averaging period will be considered by the Regional Board and included in the administrative record for the proposed Basin Plan amendments. Please also see response to comment 11.6. Opportunity for input from the public and water entities has been provided as noticed in the Notice of Hearing and Opportunity to Comment issued on August 4, 2014.

12.7	The public and water entities were also not involved or consulted when Appendix C, the Site Specific Objective and Anti-Degradation Analysis, was done. This analysis would have been more helpful to the valley had it included other related constituents and other upstream reaches. If the Basin Plan Amendments do not provide guidelines for chloride in Reach 7, and for other key constituent in Reaches 5- 7, a longer and more expensive process will be required to proceed with plans for water recharge in the upper watershed. We are in a time of record drought and need to take prompt advantage of public support and grant funding, particularly if projects can achieve multiple benefits. My agency (NCWD) and others will be working hard to maximize every drop of water in Santa Clarita. SSOs supportive of water reuse were discussed in a November 24, 2008 RWQCB staff report, but are not in this current version. I ask that a pathway for chloride, sulfate and TDS site specific objectives be discussed for all reaches in the upper watershed at this time, so the process does not have to be reopened later.	The site specific objective and antidegradation analysis were conducted to support narrow changes to the TMDL and Chapter 3 of the Basin Plan to facilitate SCVSD's implementation of TMDL requirements. The Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is required to address the water quality impairments in Reaches 5 and 6 that are identified on the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List, and to ensure that downstream surface water quality is also protected. The request to revise objectives for other reaches and constituents not subject to the TMDL is outside of the scope of the TMDL and the proposed amendments.
12.8	Attachment B to the Resolution includes a Problem Statement that states reduced crop yields occur when watering avocados, strawberries, and nursery crops with water with elevated levels of chloride. The Literature Review used for the hearings in 2006 actually found no evidence of effect on strawberries and nursery crops at levels higher than were adopted. It suggested further study before setting a limit for avocados and, if I recall correctly, referred to leaf damage not crop reduction. Avocado production was reportedly high and continues to be high according to testimony I have heard. Strawberries are not generally grown along the Santa Clara River at present, and many areas of the state grow all of these crops in higher chloride level water. RWQCB staff has verbally said the 100 limit is actually being required for historical reasons, though I am not sure of the exact basis for that. The statement in this section should be factual and accurately reflect why this is being mandated and I urge a revision for that reason.	The problem statement has not changed since the 2008 TMDL and is supported by the Literature Review and Evaluation and the administrative record. A re-evaluation of the basis for the existing chloride water quality objective of 100 mg/L is outside the scope of this item.
12.9	The Waste Load Allocations (for point sources) statement in Attachment B appear to reduce the waste load allocations for all other dischargers in the basin to 100 mg/l where previously they had variable and higher averages ranging from 117-150 with 3 or 12 month averaging and maximums of up to 230. Again, since no one but Sanitation District was involved in the	The WLAs for major point sources have been increased since the 2008 TMDL from 100 mg/L measured as an instantaneous maximum, to 100 mg/L measured as a 3-month average. The 2008 WLAs for the minor point sources equal to 117 and 150 mg/L were conditioned

	discussions, I feel that this may adversely affect other dischargers including businesses, water well operations, water recycling and recharge projects. It is not clear why the higher limits are being removed but, at minimum, a reopener should be provided here so that future studies (such as the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan or other modeling) can demonstrate other levels that might be sufficient.	upon implementation of the AWRM Program; if the AWRM Program was not implemented, the existing objective of 100 mg/L expressed as an instantaneous maximum would apply. Since the AWRM Program is not being implemented, the existing objective of 100 mg/L as an instantaneous maximum applies. Thus, the currently proposed WLAs of 100 mg/L as a 3-month average for minor point sources also represent an increase from the 2008 TMDL.
12.10	Seasonal Variations / 1.0 Alternate Water Supply in Attachment B seems to imply a mandate to supply additional water to downstream users if water at Blue Cut exceeds 100 mg/l and removes provisions for drought and the prior limit of 117 mg/l. It includes a 3-month averaging provision. As with other sections, remember that the 100 mg/l was apparently (except as noted above) based on a literature review that only found 2 relevant documents noting some effects on one crop only – avocados. Also remember per prior testimony that all of these crops grow successfully in higher chloride concentrations in other areas of the same RWQCB and in other regions in the state. More importantly this section is problematic because it does not define diversion (though I would assume direct not indirect diversions…. it is not clear) nor does it define how many downstream users there might be or what geographic area they would be in. In the required "proof" this repeats the fallacy that strawberries or the mentioned "other crops" were found to be salt sensitive at 100 mg/l…they were absolutely not and any applications for water giveways should not include them. Much if not all of the downstream area relies on groundwater wells subject to influence by agricultural discharge itself, discharge from the Piru Dam, and discharges from other downstream dischargers. Surface flows are non-existent most of the year in much of the downstream area. This entire section is too open ended and too vague and should be removed. It would indeed be both difficult to justify technically and also could potentially result in huge legal challenges and water redistribution mandates. RWQCB should stick to setting a discharge limit here, not begin to mandate water redistribution that clearly would have CEQA and other impacts that have not been analyzed to any degree at this time.	The requirement for SCVSD to provide alternate water supply to agricultural diverters during the TMDL implementation period has been included in the TMDL since 2003 and its consideration is outside the scope of this item.

13.1	We urge that the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) move the public hearing for the Basin Plan Amendment to a location in the SCV to make public participation more convenient and enhance public input.	A range of items is on the Board's agenda each month; often items may be of interest to stakeholders from different parts of the Region. Due to this, and the fact that the board meeting venue is generally decided months in advance and usually before the month's agenda is finalized, it is not possible to arrange venues based on a single agenda item.
13.2	The RWMG strongly supports all of the proposed amendments to the Basin Plan for the Los Angeles Region contained in the staff report.	Comment noted.
13.3	The November 24, 2008 LARWQCB Staff Report (Staff Report) (Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Reconsideration Conditional Site Specific Objectives (SSOs) for Chloride, and Interim Waste Load Allocations for Sulfate and Total Dissolved Solids) allowed for interim WLAs for chloride, total dissolved solids (TDS) and sulfate. The August 4, 2014 Staff Report does not address TDS and sulfate and makes limited changes to chloride SSOs. The 2008 Staff Report recognized the need for and recommended interim levels and objectives designed to facilitate the use of recycled water in the upper reaches of the SCR. These revised objectives were to be evaluated in modeling studies to be performed by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (SCVSD). Ongoing studies contained in the Salt and Nutrient Water Plan (SNMP) being prepared for the groundwater basin, that is due to the RWQCB by December 31, 2014, will provide additional information to support revised objectives. Further studies providing more extensive modeling may need to be performed after the SNMP submission.	The application of interim WLAs for total dissolved solids (TDS) and sulfate in the 2008 TMDL were contingent upon implementation of the AWRM Program, which is no longer an implementation option for the TMDL. Water recycling was considered critical to the success of and stakeholder support for the AWRM Program. The interim WLAs for sulfate and TDS were put in place to allow SCVSD time to conduct special studies on the impacts of sulfate and TDS concentrations at existing levels on groundwater quality and the potential for sulfate and TDS SSOs. The interim WLAs were set to expire on May 4, 2015 and would be replaced either with final WLAs based on the results of SSOs, if developed, or existing water quality objectives. The AWRM Program was not implemented, and SCVSD did not conduct the special studies on the impacts of sulfate and TDS on groundwater quality; therefore, interim WLAs for sulfate and TDS are not included in the proposed revisions.

13.4	In an effort to promote recycled water use and comply with Water Code Section 13241, the RWMG requests that the RWQCB staff consider amending local chloride, TDS and sulfate surface and ground water objectives to levels shown in the table below and, if necessary, provide direction for technical studies that would support a basin plan amendment. These same constituents should have consistent groundwater objectives for Reaches 5 and 6 to facilitate recycled water projects that replace potable water used for irrigation. The RWMG also requests that the RWQCB staff identify any additional steps necessary to maintain reuse flexibility. Such actions would support the region's IRWMP and UWMP to provide an additional 21,000 afy of water to the region by 2050. Consistent with the requested changes in Reaches 5 and 6 to support recycled water use, and to help promote the recovery of treated wastewater and enhance the Santa Clara River groundwater basin, consistency with the Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) within Reaches 5, 6 and 7 is critical. As previously stated, SCVSD has committed to a chloride reduction project that includes membrane filtration/reverse osmosis. This reduction in chloride in the lower reaches to levels below 100 mg/L, and lower levels of TDS and sulfate, provide an offset for the discharge of tertiary treated recycled water upstream and reduce impacts downstream of Reach 5. This provides an opportunity and nexus to develop a collaborative conjunctive reuse project utilizing treated wastewater. The RWMG also requests that new conditional SSOs for surface water in Reach 7 and local ground water sub-basins be developed to be consistent with Reaches 5 and 6 as shown in the Table below.	The requested changes are outside of the scope of the proposed amendments. The purpose of the proposed revisions is to fully protect the most sensitive beneficial use, salt-sensitive agriculture, of the Upper Santa Clara River by ensuring that chloride water quality objectives protective of this use are attained. The revisions are also meant to facilitate SCVSD's implementation of TMDL requirements, in a cost effective manner, after resolving previous delays in implementation through enforcement actions. The Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is required to address the water quality impairments in Reaches 5 and 6 that are identified on the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List, and to ensure that downstream surface water quality is also protected. The request to revise objectives for other reaches and constituents not subject to the TMDL is outside of the scope of the TMDL and the proposed amendments. Amendments to the current groundwater mineral objectives will require a separate process and Board action from the currently proposed amendments. Generally any proposed changes to water quality objectives have to be developed in consideration of the beneficial uses of the waterbodies in question, as well as anti-degradation requirements if these changes would result in an overall lowering of water quality. Any such proposed changes to groundwater basin mineral quality objectives, in support of increased recycled water use, should be undertaken as part of a comprehensive strategy to manage salt and nutrients on a basin-wide scale as is required by the State's Recycled Water Policy. Through the Upper Santa Clara Salt and Nutrient Management Plan development process, such considerations can be weighed along with other basin water quality management strategies.

Requirement/ Result	Chloride (mg/L)	TDS (mg/L)	Sulfate (mg/L)
Groundwater Basin Plan Objective			
SC-Mint Cyn.	150	~~800~~ 1,000	~~150~~ 250
SC-Bouquet, San	~~100~~ 150	~~700~~ 1,000	250
Surface Water Basin Plan Objective			
Reach 7 (Lang Gaging-Bouquet Cyn.)	~~100~~ 150 150 (upstream VWRP)	~~800~~ 1,000 1,000	~~150~~ 250 300
Reach 6 (Bouquet Cnyn- Hwy 99)	100 (downstream VWRP)	1,000	400

14.1	Los Angeles is too far away and the hour of the public for working citizens is impossible for practical attendance. For open and transparent government, the public hearing should be held where citizens are paying for the remediation of the chloride issue.	A range of items is on the Board's agenda each month; often items may be of interest to stakeholders from different parts of the Region. Due to this, and the fact that the board meeting venue is generally decided months in advance and usually before the month's agenda is finalized, it is not possible to arrange venues based on a single agenda item.
14.2	The measuring of the chloride level should be at Blue Cut or further west. Highway 99 is not applicable or practical.	All reaches of the Santa Clara River are subject to water quality standards; therefore, water quality monitoring must be conducted in each reach. Measuring at Blue Cut or further west would not be adequate to assess conditions in Reaches 5 and 6. SCVSD has been collecting water quality samples near Highway 99 for many years.
14.3	Recycled water should be a must for the Canyon Country people who have been paying for the processing of their water for years.	The proposed revisions will not cause any reduction in the amount of recycled water available for use in the Santa Clarita Valley.
14.3	Other areas in California have higher limits above 100 mg/L and are growing avocados and strawberries. Ventura County farmers are having bumper crops for over 10 years at the present mg/L without degradation. No one including the Sanitation Districts and the Regional Water Quality Control Board has produced current certified scientific evidence that any damage has been done to farming crops.	The chloride water quality objective of 100 mg/L is supported by the Literature Review and Evaluation and the administrative record.
15.1	With regret, we are sorry to say that the hearing on October 9 may not legally proceed as a result of the defective legal notice. There are indeed two such defects. The first is that in the newspaper legal advertisement legal notice, the most visually prominent posting as to the hearing date indicated the date was February 6, 2014. The correct October 9 hearing date appears in the ad in smaller type.	Water Code section 13244 requires the regional board to hold a public hearing prior to adopting any water quality control plan (or revision to the existing plan), and to provide notice of the hearing by publication in the affected county pursuant to section 6061 of the Government Code. The newspaper notice of the public hearing to consider the Proposed Basin Plan Amendment to Revise the TMDL and Adopt SSOs for Chloride in the Upper Santa Clara River first appeared

	The second noticing defect involves two different dates being dispersed to the public regarding what the Agency deadline is for the submission of written testimony. In the newspaper ad, the deadline is listed as being September 15. On the Board Website, however, the final date is listed as September 18. Sadly, the good faith effort to correct these errors will only compound the defect. A correction ad regarding the actual hearing date will list the written comment deadline, as it should have been, on September 18. Unfortunately, this ad will appear in the Newspapers one day past the comment deadline on Friday, September 19. California law is clear regarding the requirements for adequate public notices. They must be free of error. They must not be confusing. They must correctly appear at least 45 days prior to the hearing. Sadly, the corrected ad does not remedy the underlining problems. First, the correction did not appear 45 days prior to the hearing. Second, the deadline listed in the correction for written testimony will be past when the ad appears. The only legal cure is to reschedule the hearing for a date 45 days later than when fully correct newspaper notice ads can be published.	on August 1, 2014. The title stated, in error, that the public hearing was to be held on February 6, 2014. The body of the newspaper notice provided the correct hearing date of October 9, 2014. Because the error was facially apparent, the correct date appeared in the body of the notice, and the correct date is posted on the Regional Water Board's website which was referenced in the notice, the publication was sufficient to satisfy the statutory requirement. In addition, the Regional Water Board published a corrected notice on September 19 and 20 (the publication date varied by newspaper), which confirmed the correct hearing date of October 9, 2014. Neither Water Code section 13244 nor Government Code section 6061 specify the time in advance of the public hearing at which notice of the hearing be provided. Therefore, even if the August 1 publication was legally insufficient, the corrected publications on September 19 and 20 provided adequate notice of the hearing. California Code of Regulations section 3779, title 23, requires the regional board to post the Notice of Filing of the Draft Substitute Environmental Document on its website, at least 30 days before the public hearing. The regional board is also required to prescribe a written comment period of at least 45 days. The Notice of Filing, which included notice of a more than 45-day written comment period ending September 18, 2014 and notice of the hearing on October 9, 2014, was posted on the Regional Water Board's website on August 4, 2014. It was also e-mailed to 727 interested parties, and sent in hard copy by U.S. Mail to an additional 35 parties, on August 4, 2014. The regulation does not require notice by newspaper publication. Federal regulations at 40 C.F.R. section 15.4 requires

		notice of public hearings to be "well publicized" and be mailed to the list of interested and affected parties maintained by the relevant agency, at least 45 days prior to the hearing. This requirement was satisfied as described above by posting a notice to the Regional Water Board's website, and notifying the parties on the Regional Water Board's list of interested parties. The regulation does not require notice by newspaper publication. The newspaper notice published on August 1, 2014 contained a second error in misstating the deadline for written comments as September 15, 2014 rather than September 18, 2014. Notice of the comment deadline is not required to be published in any newspaper. Therefore, this error was harmless though the date was corrected in the revised newspaper notices published on September 19 and 20. All other notices posted on the Regional Water Board's website and sent by e-mail and U.S. mail to interested parties, contained the correct deadline of September 18, 2014. Furthermore, the Regional Water Board is not aware of any party who was prevented or impeded from submitting written comments because of this error in the original newspaper notice.
15.2	Another immediate question is where the actual location of the next hearing will be. Rumors abound that strong "pressure" is being placed on the Board to hold the Santa Clara River hearing in Simi Valley. The Santa Clara River does not run through, nor does it drain into Simi Valley. Given the overwhelming effect this proposed action will have on Santa Clarita Valley, the only place for the hearing is in Santa Clarita. Many will recall that the Board and the Staff agreed at the August hearing to hold a hearing in Santa Clarita Valley sometime between September and January. The hearing on these issues will be perfect to hold in Santa Clarita.	A range of items is on the Board's agenda each month; often items may be of interest to stakeholders from different parts of the Region. Due to this, and the fact that the board meeting venue is generally decided months in advance and usually before the month's agenda is finalized, it is not possible to arrange venues based on a single agenda item.

15.3	MORE TIME MAKES SENSE. PLEASE GRANT JUST THAT, AND THAT ALONE. ACWA supports the concept of recognizing that it is impossible for a multi mega million dollar public works project such as what is proposed here to be ready to function in eight months by May of 2015. Therefore, the time extension makes sense. Please see comments that are more detailed further on.	Comment noted.
15.4	MORE TIME MUST BE USED PROPERLY. For many years, basic principles found in State Water Law and in the California Environmental Quality Act have been absent from this process. More time will present a priceless opportunity to finally have the truth take center stage. For a long time, the "chloride" question has really been used in an attempt to correct a water supply crisis downstream from the Upper Santa Clara River. It is a water supply question for the "downstream users", disguised as a water "quality" question. See more comments below.	While the Regional Water Board supports integrated water resources approaches that address water quality and have water supply benefits, the sole regulatory purpose of the proposed revisions is to fully protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River and ensure that water quality standards are attained. The Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL is required to address the water quality impairments in Reaches 5 and 6 that are identified on the Federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List
15.5	OTHER TMDL ISSUES AWAIT. COMBINE ALL OF THEM IN THE NPDES PERMIT RENEWAL. The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation has been issuing incessant warnings regarding possible fines for non-compliance. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board staff is, as a whole, the most service oriented group of skilled professionals I have encountered. They are a pleasure to work with. In confidence, two of these fine people expressed apprehension about not moving ahead now with NPDES, which is frowned upon by the EPA. The NPDES permits for the two Santa Clarita Valley sewage treatment plants are expired, and have been so for six months. This "chloride" issue should be part of their renewal, and not before.	The action proposed is a quasi-legislative action to revise water quality regulations that are subsequently implemented through NPDES permits. If the Regional Water Board does not adopt the proposed Basin Plan amendments, the existing water quality objectives of 100 mg/L as an instantaneous maximum will apply when the NPDES permits for the Saugus and Valencia WRPs are renewed in 2015.
15.6	SANITATION DISTRICT HAS SAID THE THINGS PROPOSED HERE CANNOT BE DONE. ACWA welcomes the chance to have each of the items proposed considered by the Water Board. Any member of the Water Board will have a fascinating experience reviewing the web site of the Sanitation District, the many brochures prepared and sent by this agency, and the numerous hearing presentations made by them. In all of these venues, EVERYTHING currently being proposed to the Water Board (A Basin Plan	The TMDL revisions are being proposed at the request of SCVSD. The proposed amendments were anticipated and envisioned in SCVSD's final chloride compliance plan.

	Amendment, new Site Specific Objectives, revised and increased TMDL's, extended deadlines for "compliance", averaging of measurements in both location and time of year), all of these are things the SCVSD has said could and would never be done.	
15.7	NOW THAT THE "IMPOSSIBLE" IS BEING PROPOSED, FINALLY DO IT RIGHT. A basic aspect of California Water Quality law states that any attempt to determine what a level of pollution will be, must be preceded by a "Water Way Background Characterization Study". This has never happened during all the discussions about chloride in the Santa Clara. A full chloride level test from the river headwaters in Acton to the Pacific is critically needed, required, and long past due. Perform these now, once in winter, and once in summer during the 4.5 years of additional time requested. The second item missing is a "real" survey of crop growth conditions in all the other areas of California that grow avocados, most with far higher irrigation water levels of chloride beyond 100 milligrams per liter. NONE of these other agriculture areas with chloride levels higher than 100 mg/L report ANY crop difficulties or damage. This process must acknowledge, discuss, and explain why numerous other heavy agriculture areas in California, many with avocado acreage, have higher ambient and TMDL chloride levels than 100 milligrams per liter, and issue no complaints at all.	The comment is not clear as to what aspect of California Water Quality law it is referring. There is no requirement for a "Water Way Background Characterization Study" in the California Water Code. Watershed-wide water quality monitoring is already being conducted in the Santa Clara River watershed as part of NPDES permitting requirements and other monitoring programs. The impact of chloride on crop production and the protective threshold for chloride have already been documented in the administrative record for the original TMDL, as well as in the 2006 and 2008 revisions to the TMDL, including the Literature Review and Evaluation. On the basis of those records and during those proceedings, the Board determined the protective threshold for salt-sensitive agriculture. This issue has been well addressed and therefore is not being reconsidered by the Board as part of this hearing.
15.8	NO DAMAGE LAWSUITS FOR CROP LOSSES AGAINST SANTA CLARITA, EVER. Santa Clarita Valley has been discharging its treated sewage water into the Santa Clara River for nearly 50 years. In all that time, not a single lawsuit for crop damage recovery has ever been filed. Will the Board and staff please discuss and explain this stunning, real world refutation of the "idea" that "beneficial users" have suffered any damage? Some have said the 100 milligram per liter chloride standard is to ensure that damage will "never happen" in the future. Of course, after almost 50 years, damage would have appeared long ago. Why no damage lawsuits after 50 years? When you go to court, you have to have proof.	The comment is outside of the scope of the hearing. See response to comment 15.7.

15.9	HIGHER CHLORIDE THAN 100 MILLIGRAMS PER LITER FOUND STATEWIDE. Areas with the same crops as found downstream from Santa Clarita, many with avocados, most with higher levels of PERMITTED AND APPROVED chloride levels than 100mg/L report no crop impairments. Will the Board and the Staff please acknowledge and explain this during the hearing?	The comment is outside of the scope of the hearing. See response to comment 15.7.
15.10	FARMERS STATEWIDE REJECTED A LOWER, UNIFORM CHLORIDE LEVEL. Former California State Assemblyman Cameron Smyth attempted to bring consistency and a level playing field to the issue of chloride levels in water for "beneficial use" agriculture crops. He met with strong resistance. From whom? Why from farmers statewide, many of whom had high levels of chloride levels in the water, had no problems, and DID NOT want their chloride level lowered to be the same as those in Ventura. Assemblyman Smyth's attempts to get a statewide standard utterly failed as a result. Please have Board and staff discussion on this, and perhaps invite Cameron Smyth to appear and testify about his efforts and results.	The comment is outside of the scope of the hearing. See response to comment 15.7.
15.11	SECTION 3- RESOLUTION ASSERTS "ENDANGERED SPECIES" DAMAGE FROM SANTA CLARA. Without substantiation, section three states that endangered species had suffered damage from the background chloride levels above 100 mg/L in the Santa Clara River. Would the Board and the Staff please acknowledge this assertion at the hearing, discuss it, and please correct it in the record. No native plant or animal experiences any damage unless chloride levels exceed 250.	Finding number 3 has been revised in response to this comment and comments from SCVSD.
15.12	SECTION 4- RESOLUTION MAKES REFERENCE TO "POINT SOURCES" OF DISCHARGE. There is an implication here that the two WRP's are the only "point sources" for chloride into the Santa Clara. Please have the Staff clarify this apparent misstatement. Among many others, there is Six Flags, numerous large restaurants and school dining operations, factories, and more, all of whom discharge large amounts of sewage with chloride in it. Please also engage the Board in this discussion.	Finding number 4 correctly states, "The major point sources that discharge chloride to the USCR are the Valencia and Saugus Water Reclamation Plants." This fact was established in the original TMDL and is supported in the administrative record. However, the TMDL addresses all point sources and assigns chloride wasteload allocations to all point sources, as discussed in the staff report and established in the Basin Plan amendment, Table 7-6.1 "Waste Load Allocations (for point sources)."

15.13	SECTION 5- STATES CHLORIDE LEVELS SET IN 1975 AND 1978. Notable for its omission is any mention during the "setting" of chloride levels in past decades, of any Chloride Background Level Study having been invested to see what the river was really like. Please, at the Staff and Board level, have an open discussion at the hearing how it is possible to have understanding of the Santa Clara, without a background study ever having been performed. This would involve actual sampling of the river water all along its entire length.	The comment is outside of the scope of the hearing. Please also see response to comment 15.7.
15.14	SECTION 7- SAYS "SOURCE REDUCTION" ALONE WOULD NOT WORK, PER "MODEL. This entire resolution and Staff report makes frequent reference to a "computer model". The report actually lists computer model conclusions, and displays charts of chloride levels in the River as if "the model" is showing real conditions, and is reliable. Gaping holes in how a computer model should be used exist here. Please have the Board and the Staff call the Sanitation District to the podium to attempt to "validate" this model. A comparison to valid traffic models is helpful in contending with this "GWASI" model and its dominant role in the chloride "issue". Traffic models, even the best, must constantly be "recalibrated" to remain valid. How is a traffic model recalibrated? Actual counts of traffic flow as it actually happens are made. Those counts then become "assumptions" which are programmed into the "model". A "run" of the model then is performed to predict traffic conditions. A second actual "ground count" is then performed. Finally, the "model run" is compared with actual observed traffic conditions. If the two match, and the model were able to accurately predict how traffic would function, the model has been proven to have correct assumptions. With this "water model", however, all that is listed are conclusions. No data what so ever is included in the resolution. There is a separate section of this agenda item that does address certain aspects of the "model", but the critical issue of how the model is measured against real world conditions, and if those measured criteria are at all accurate is not present. Please have the Board and the Staff request a full and complete presentation from the Sanitation District about how the "water model" functions. Please ask at least the following questions:	The GSWI model was calibrated as part of implementation of the TMDL adopted in 2004. The calibrated model was reviewed and approved as an appropriate and adequate modeling tool by agricultural, water supply, and municipal stakeholders through a collaborative process and an independent GSWI Technical Advisory Panel. The development and calibration of the GSWI model is documented in the report, Task 2B-1 “Numerical Model Development and Scenario Results” (CH2M Hill, 2008; Geomatrix, 2008), which is included in the administrative record. The previously calibrated GWSI model was used to simulate two operational scenarios to evaluate SCVSD’s request for a flow-weighting approach and to support the proposed amendments. The results are presented in the staff report, and a detailed description of the assumptions and inputs for the modeling runs are included in Appendix A, titled “Development and Results of Additional GSWIM Simulations for the USCR Chloride TMDL Compliance Project”, dated July 2014, and prepared by AMEC. The questions posed in this comment were addressed through the administrative process for the 2008 TMDL. For a detailed explanation of the GSWI model, please

	a) What are the exact "assumptions" programmed into this model? b) How often is this model "recalibrated" against real world conditions? c) When you calibrate this model, exactly what kind, and how many measurements do you take? d) Where in the Santa Clara River do you take your assumption measurements? e) What locations do you use and sample? Please bring a map and a list. f) What time, (or preferably "times") of the year do you take measurements. g) What modeling software do you use for this GWASI Model? h) Is the model used anywhere else, and if so, by whom? The conclusion in this section that source control would not reduce chloride any further is perplexing.	see Task 2B-1 "Numerical Model Development and Scenario Results" (CH2M Hill, 2008; Geomatrix, 2008). Finding 6 in the resolution states that the TMDL adopted by the Board in 2002 determined that water quality objectives could not be met with source control alone, and that some type of advanced treatment would be necessary to protect the beneficial uses. This previous determination is also summarized in the staff report (p. 8).
15.15	All parties to this "chloride question" agree that salt regenerating water softeners have played a significant role in Santa Clarita Valley chloride levels. We also know that there are still a huge number of them in use. Just monitoring the sales of salt at stores all across Santa Clarita is stunning. There are also large industrial users with water softeners still in use in significant numbers. There are also salt-water swimming pools, "salt rub" spas, plus all the home units still in place.	The Regional Water Board agrees that the removal of self-regenerating water softeners has contributed to significant reductions in chloride loading. According to SCVSD, over 8,100 automatic water softeners have been removed, resulting in a reduction in chloride loading of approximately 55 mg/L in the District's effluent.