

APPENDIX E. CEQA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Project Title:

Action Plan for the Scott River Watershed Sediment and Temperature TMDLs.

Project Proponent:

State of California
 North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
 Santa Rosa, California 95403

Project Contact:

David Leland
 707-576-2220

Project Description:

Adoption of two amendments to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region* (the Basin Plan) as follows:

- Introduction to Total Maximum Daily Loads
- Action Plan for the Scott River Watershed Sediment and Temperature Total Maximum Daily Loads (Scott River TMDL Action Plan)

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected (Explanation Attached):

	Aesthetics	X	Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology /Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources		Noise		Population / Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		

Evaluation of Environmental Impacts:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS – Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?			X	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY – Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				X
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?				X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X
VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				X
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
X. MINERAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
XI. NOISE – Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES – Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i) Fire protection?				X
ii) Police protection?				X
iii) Schools?				X
iv) Parks?				X
v) Other public facilities?				X
XIV. RECREATION				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				X
XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?				X
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

Explanation of Environmental Impacts:

AESTHETICS

There is nothing in the proposed TMDL and Action Plan that will impact designated scenic vistas or highways, or have a demonstrable negative aesthetic affect, or result in increase glare.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan may result in small reductions in agricultural land use along streams. Riparian buffers are crucial to the restoration of water temperatures and they also reduce sediment inputs. The width of the riparian buffer will vary by location and, in some locations, the buffer may be extended into land currently used for agricultural production. The proposed TMDL and Action Plan will not change the agricultural character of the watershed. The proposal will not result in conversion of the land to development. Riparian protection areas will maintain or increase the biological resources, and will have a beneficial impact on runoff to surface water. The proposal does not conflict with existing

zoning for agricultural use, or Williamson Act contracts. The proposal does not involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use

AIR QUALITY

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan will not adversely affect air quality, result in increase exposure to sensitive species through the air pathway, or result in changes in temperature, humidity, precipitation, winds, cloudiness, or other atmospheric conditions.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan is not expected to adversely affect plants and animals, including rare, threatened, or endangered species. The proposal does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce fish or wildlife habitat, cause fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan will have no direct or indirect impact on any cultural resources.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan will not affect any geologic or soil conditions, except that erosion and sediment waste discharges will be prevented or minimized. This is a beneficial, not adverse, impact.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The proposal will not impact these areas.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This project may beneficially impact discharges to surface waters and may alter surface water quality by reducing sediment waste generation from anthropogenic activities. Turbidity levels will decrease as a result of decreased sediment waste entering surface waters. Water temperature may decrease as excess sediment is reduced allowing formation of deeper pools and as riparian shading recovers in response to the Action Plan implementation actions. A decrease in water temperature and sedimentation would be a beneficial impact. This project may change deposition or erosion patterns by reducing the rate of anthropogenic sedimentation in sediment-impaired waters. This proposal will result in a reduction in erosion and sediment deposition from anthropogenic activities. Natural sources of sediment will not be affected. Given the degree to which accelerated erosion and excess sedimentation has adversely affected beneficial uses in the Scott River watershed, any impact to natural erosion and deposition is expected to be beneficial and not adverse.

This project may change absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff by the use of sediment control practices, such as mulching bare soils and grading to reduce formation of rills and gullies, which increase the adsorption of water and decrease the amount of sediment-laden runoff. This project may change drainage patterns so

that sediment waste input to surface waters is decreased. Land uses have resulted in decreased adsorption of overland flow have lead to accelerated erosion and excess sedimentation in receiving waters. The project will have a beneficial effect on absorption rates, drainage patterns, and the rate and amount of surface water runoff.

The TMDL Action Plan requests that the Siskiyou County study the connection between groundwater and surface water, the impacts of groundwater levels on surface flow and beneficial uses, and the impacts of groundwater levels on the health of riparian vegetation in the Scott River watershed. The results of the study will be used to evaluate the effects of anthropogenic water use on water temperatures. Likewise, the Action Plan encourages water users to develop and implement water conservation practices in the Scott River watershed. Water conservation may result in an increase in groundwater inputs to streams and will not have a negative environmental impact.

LAND USE AND PLANNING

The proposal will not conflict with any applicable land use plans.

MINERAL RESOURCES

The proposal will not result in the loss of a mineral resource.

NOISE

The proposal will not result in an increase in existing noise levels or cause exposure of people to severe noise levels.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

The proposal will not affect induce substantial population growth population growth. The proposal will not affect development patterns or displace substantial numbers of people.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The proposal will not result in any adverse impacts to fire, police, schools, parks, or other public facilities.

RECREATION

The implementation of the proposed TMDL and Action Plan will not increase the use of neighborhood parks or recreational facilities. The proposal will not require construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan will not impact existing transportation or traffic circulation patterns.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The proposed TMDL and Action Plan may impact the maintenance of public roads because it will require that anthropogenic activities, including road construction and maintenance, be conducted so that sediment waste discharges are in compliance with the proposed Action Plan. Construction and maintenance of public roads is often regulated under other permitting

authorities, such as the NPDES program, that require prevention or control of sediment waste. At a minimum, road construction generally requires compliance with Best Management Practices, including erosion and sediment controls. These authorities are independent of the proposed project, so the proposed project would have little additional effect on the maintenance of public roads. Reducing the adverse impact of excess sedimentation of streams resulting from poorly constructed and maintained roads is a beneficial impact.

DETERMINATION On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X	I find that the proposed Water Quality Control Plan amendment will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment.
	I find that the proposed Water Quality Control Plan amendment could have a significant adverse effect on the environment. However, there are feasible alternatives and/or feasible mitigation measures that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact. These alternatives are discussed in the attached written report.
	I find the proposed Water Quality Control Plan amendment may have a significant effect on the environment. There are no feasible alternatives and/or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts. See the attached written report for a discussion of this determination.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Catherine Kuhlman Executive Officer, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region <i>Printed Name/Title</i>	