



San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

September 10, 2020
ECM PIN 650655/LStarkey

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING SANTA MARGARITA RIVER NUTRIENT TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) will hold a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting for a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan) to establish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and an implementation plan or an alternative water quality resoration strategy for nutrients in the Santa Margarita River. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to seek input from public agencies and members of the public on the range of project actions, alternatives, reasonably foreseeable methods of compliance, significant impacts to be analyzed, cumulative impacts if any, and mitigation measures that will reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

The meeting will be held on the following date and time:

**Tuesday, October 27, 2020
10:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

Remote Participation Only

Join via Zoom at:

<https://waterboards.zoom.us/j/99002768670?pwd=cEdFWFhlUDQwUUVyUjk3cjhYTkJ6UT09>

The intent of the scoping meeting is to provide a forum for early public consultation to help San Diego Water Board staff develop the environmental document under the Water Board's certified regulatory program. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3775.5.) During this meeting, staff will provide an overview of the process for development of the Basin Plan amendment for the Santa Margarita River Nutrient TMDLs and the proposed schedule for the project. Staff will receive public verbal comments regarding potential significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures related to the amendment.

HENRY ABARBANEL, PH.D., CHAIR | DAVID GIBSON, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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Procedural Matters

There will be no sworn testimony or cross-examination of participants at this meeting. However, San Diego Water Board staff may ask questions of speakers. To ensure a productive and efficient public meeting in which all participants have an opportunity to participate, questions and comments may be time-limited. The San Diego Water Board will be providing a Draft CEQA Checklist. All verbal comments received during the scoping meeting will be considered in developing the TMDLs, implementation plan, and the environmental document. Written comments will be accepted until November 6, 2020. However, the San Diego Water Board will not be preparing a response to comments document during the scoping process. A public comment period and subsequent responses to comments will be provided later in the project schedule after a Draft Staff Report is completed. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3779.) A quorum of the San Diego Water Board members may be present at the meeting. The San Diego Water Board will not deliberate or take any action during the meeting.

Background Information

The 2014/2016 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments includes nutrients as pollutants in the lower 19 miles and upper 18 miles of the Santa Margarita River (River). Discharges of nutrient-laden wastes to the River and its tributaries cause and/or contribute to exceedances of Water Quality Objectives and adversely impact the Cold Freshwater Habitat (COLD) and Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species (RARE) beneficial uses designated to the River and its tributaries and the Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN) beneficial use through impact to large groundwater basins in the Santa Margarita Watershed. Nutrients discharged to the surface waters and groundwater in the Santa Margarita Watershed also contribute to the impairment of the Santa Margarita Estuary downstream of the River.

Please see the Santa Margarita River and Estuary TMDLs website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/tmdls/santa_margarita_river_estuary.html for further background information.

Project Description

The San Diego Water Board is developing TMDLs and an implementation plan for nutrients to attain Water Quality Objectives that support beneficial uses in the upper and lower Santa Margarita River segments. The goals of the TMDLs are to reduce nutrient pollution and resulting eutrophication in order to attain and support beneficial uses. The proposed TMDLs will include load and waste load allocations for nutrients in the River's watershed, numeric targets to protect the River's most sensitive beneficial uses, and an implementation plan. The TMDL will be developed through utilizing models of the River and its tributaries to estimate the nutrient assimilative capacity of the Santa Margarita River and the load reductions required under different scenarios. A peer reviewed Staff Report will summarize the TMDLs, implementation plan, and/or water quality restoration strategy.

Document Availability

The Santa Margarita River Nutrient TMDL Draft Staff Report and full CEQA document are being developed and not yet available for public comment. A copy of the Santa Margarita River Nutrient TMDLs Draft CEQA Checklist is attached to this notice and will be available electronically at least 10 days prior to the workshop on the San Diego Water Board Web site at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/tmdls/santa_margarita_river_estuary.html

Accessibility

Persons requiring special accommodations or language needs should contact Lark Starkey by email at Lark.Starkey@Waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (619) 521-3365 at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. TTY/TDD/ Speech-to-Speech users may dial 7-1-1 for the California Relay Service.

Electronic Mailing List

To receive future notices pertaining to the development of the Santa Margarita River Nutrient TMDLs, please subscribe to the electronic mailing list at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg9_subscribe.html (select "Santa Margarita River Watershed TMDLs").

Interpreter Services

Persons requiring real-time interpretation services at this public meeting should contact Lark Starkey by email at Lark.Starkey@Waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (619) 521-3365 at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

Contact Information

Any questions or concerns regarding the above subject should be directed to Lark Starkey by email at Lark.Starkey@Waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at (619) 521-3365 at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.