State Water Resources Control Board

16 June 2023

Shimshon Belkin, Ph.D., Professor
Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences
The Alexander Silberman Institute of Life Sciences
Silberman Life Sciences Building 3-482
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Jerusalem 91904, Israel

Sent via email

SUBJECT: COMMENCEMENT OF REVIEW OF PROPOSED TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS FOR INDICATOR BACTERIA AND TRASH IN THE LOWER TIJUANA RIVER

Dear Professor Belkin,

Thank you for accepting the role as an external scientific peer reviewer of said request. The purpose of this letter is to initiate the external peer review.

Components of the review:

1. Request for External Scientific Peer Review, with the following attachments:
   a. Attachment 1: Plain English Summary.
   b. Attachment 2: Scientific Assumptions, Findings, and Conclusions to Review.
   c. Attachment 3: Individuals who Participated in the Development of the Proposal.
   d. Attachment 4: References Cited.
2. Proposed rule or related documents (Draft TMDL staff report).
3. Electronic copies of references cited.
4. *Guidance for Reviewers*.

All components of the review are posted at a secure FTP site:

Site: https://ftp.waterboards.ca.gov

- Username: gbowes-ftp28
- Password: zvdPDX

The findings, assumptions, and conclusions that need review are listed in Attachment 2 of the review request. I ask that you review those findings, assumptions, and

conclusions which you previously stated, in communications with me dated 02 June 2023, that you could address with confidence, based on your expertise and experience. These are the following conclusions with a focus on microbial pathogens and indicators:

1.a. Are the proposed numeric targets in the draft staff report reasonable and adequately protective?

2.a. Are the seven transboundary flows the significant sources of anthropogenic indicator bacteria and trash in the lower Tijuana River?

3.a. Are the proposed TMDLs and load/wasteload allocations reasonable and adequately protective?

3.b. Are the reductions in indicator bacteria concentrations that are required to attain water quality standards calculated appropriately?

If you decide to address other assumptions, findings, or conclusions, identify the expertise and experience you are relying on to do so. Please refer to *Guidance for Reviewers* for more information about your review and subsequent report, including formatting and web accessibility guidelines.

I will help provide support for any questions you have. To ensure a clear record of our communication, all communications should be in writing (email is preferred). My email address below should prepopulate an email.

Please email your review to me no later than **04 August 2023**. I will forward all reviews and the curricula vitae of all reviewers to the requesting organization. All information may be posted on their website.

The organization requesting the review may require clarification or additional information on a specific subject. If this occurs, I will ask you to supplement your review to address those comments.

Your participation in this review assignment is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Carol Perkins
Manager, CalEPA External Scientific Peer Review Program
Office of Research, Planning, and Performance
State Water Resources Control Board
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