March 21, 2019

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

TIJUANA RIVER INDICATOR BACTERIA AND TRASH 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 to seek input on the scope, content, and potential environmental effects that should be considered in the development of an amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan) to establish an implementation plan for Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for indicator bacteria and trash in the Tijuana River.

The meeting will be held at the following location and time:

Wednesday, May 15, 2019
1:00 PM – 3:30 PM
Tijuana River Estuary Visitor Center
301 Caspian Way
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

The intent of the scoping meeting is to provide a forum for early public consultation to help Board staff develop the environmental document under the Water Board's certified regulatory program (23 CCR§3775.5). During this meeting, staff will provide an overview of the process, development of the Basin Plan amendment for indicator bacteria and trash 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.

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. All verbal comments received during the scoping meeting will be considered in developing the TMDLs and the environmental document. The San Diego Water Board will not be preparing a response to comments document. 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 Tijuana River watershed is in the southernmost portion of the San Diego Water Board's jurisdiction. Divided by the U.S.-Mexico international border, approximately one-third of its area is in the U.S. and two-thirds is in Mexico. In the lower watershed, the river and several tributaries cross from Mexico into the U.S.; these transboundary flows act as conduits for pollution generated in Mexico. As such, the pollution is transported through the river valley and estuary, and into the Pacific Ocean.

The San Diego Water Board has identified several "water quality limited segments" in and adjacent to the Tijuana River watershed. These are surface waters on the U.S. side of the border that do not support all of their designated beneficial uses due to pollutants that cause impairments. Although the overall water quality in the upper Tijuana River watershed (U.S. side) is considered good, the lower watershed is severely impaired. The 2014/2016 Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments (303(d) List) includes the Tijuana River as well as the downstream Tijuana River Estuary and Pacific Ocean shoreline.

The San Diego Water Board has identified human health and ecosystem impacts in the Tijuana River Valley as regional priorities for many years. The San Diego Water Board suspended previous TMDL efforts in 2012 to focus on a stakeholder-based Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team Strategy. In 2018, the San Diego Water Board directed staff to restart TMDL development to address solid waste and the impairments of contact recreation (or REC-1) beneficial uses. The Basin Plan uses fecal indicator bacteria as a water quality objective for the contact recreation beneficial use.

Project Description
The San Diego Water Board is developing TMDLs and a program of implementation for indicator bacteria and trash to attain water quality objectives that support beneficial uses along the lower Tijuana River. Although the Tijuana River is on the 303(d) List for impairments due to a total of 20 pollutants, control of the sources of indicator bacteria and trash is likely to result in a significant degree of control of the remaining pollutants. Pollutants that are conveyed by dry weather and wet weather transboundary flows are intermingled. Reduction of indicator bacteria requires reduction of sewage and polluted urban runoff entering the Tijuana River Valley. Therefore, the loads and concentrations of other pollutants inherent in sewage and polluted urban runoff would also be reduced.

Document Availability
An informational scoping document explaining the proposed Basin Plan amendment and other relevant documents will be available electronically on the San Diego Water Board web site at:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/tmdls/tijuanarivervalley.html

Parking and Accessibility
For directions to the Tijuana River Estuary Visitor Center, please refer to:
http://trnerr.org/plan_a_visit/directions/

Persons requiring special accommodation should contact Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039 or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.

Electronic Mailing List
To receive future notices pertaining to the development of the Tijuana River Indicator Bacteria and Trash TMDLs, please subscribe to the electronic mailing list at:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/reg9_subscribe.html
(select "Tijuana River Valley TMDLs")

Interpreter Services
Persons requiring real-time interpretation services at this public meeting should contact Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039 or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov by 5:00 pm on April 19, 2019.

Contact Information
Any questions or concerns regarding the above subject should be directed to Melissa Corona by phone at (619) 521-8039 or by email at Melissa.Corona@waterboards.ca.gov.

DAVID W. GIBSON
Executive Officer
March 21, 2019