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State Water Resources Control Board

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
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NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE NORTH COAST REGION TO ESTABLISH TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLs) FOR DISSOLVED OXYGEN AND WATER TEMPERATURE IN THE SHASTA RIVER BASIN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will now accept comments on a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the North Coast Region that would establish TMDLs for dissolved oxygen (DO) and water temperature in the Shasta River Watershed. The proposed amendment and the State Water Board item language and draft resolution are available on the State Water Board's Web site at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/tmdl/tmdl.html> or can be received by mail by contacting Michael Buckman at (916) 341-5479. The proposed amendment was adopted by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (North Coast Water Board) on June 28, 2006. The State Water Board expects to consider the proposed amendment at a future meeting. Notice of that meeting will be published separately.

The Shasta River Watershed, which includes all tributaries and Lake Shastina, is not meeting water quality standards due to low DO concentrations and elevated temperature conditions. The beneficial uses impaired by these conditions are: cold freshwater habitat (COLD); rare, threatened, and endangered species (RARE); migration of aquatic organisms (MIGR); spawning, reproduction, and/or early development of fish (SPWN); commercial and sport fishing (COMM); and contact and non-contact water recreation (REC-1 and REC-2). The designated beneficial uses associated with the cold freshwater salmonid fishery (COMM, COLD, RARE, MIGR, SPWN) are the designated beneficial uses most sensitive to the DO and water temperature impairments. This proposed amendment addresses the impairment of these beneficial uses by establishing TMDLs for DO and water temperature in the Shasta River Watershed. Controllable factors of DO and temperature in the watershed include tailwater return flows¹, flow modification and diversion, and Lake Shastina and minor channel impoundments.

The proposed amendment establishes numeric targets in the TMDL consistent with the Basin Plan water quality objectives. The TMDL's numeric target for DO is equal to the minimum designated water quality objective for the Shasta River Watershed in the Basin Plan, which is 7.0 milligrams per liter. The numeric targets for temperature are equal to the TMDL allocations. The load allocations for dissolved oxygen are in terms of hourly oxygen demand in pounds and the reductions necessary to achieve water quality compliance in each given section of the Shasta River.

The implementation actions are designed to encourage and build upon on-going, restoration and enhancement efforts in the watershed. Responsible parties may find that more than one implementation action is applicable to their circumstances. Implementation actions are

¹ **Tailwater Return Flow:** Water applied to a field for irrigation at rates that exceed soil infiltration and evaporation rates, resulting in runoff of irrigation water to a surface water body. Same as Irrigation Return Flows.

organized by source or land use activity, and each responsible party considered appropriate to implement TMDL actions. Action items are fully independent from each other and require 100 percent implementation within each source or land use category.

Reassessment is likely to occur every three years during the Basin Planning Triennial Review process. The proposed amendment states that North Coast Water Board staff will report to their Board at least yearly on the status and progress of implementation activities, and on whether current efforts are reasonably calculated and on track to achieve water quality standards. The proposed amendment also states that in addition, North Coast Water Board staff will conduct a comprehensive and formal assessment of effectiveness of collaborative efforts in the on-going programs and additional efforts recommended by the TMDL Action Plan within five years from the date of U.S Environmental Protection Agency approval. A more extensive reassessment will occur ten years from the date the TMDL Action Plan is effective, or sooner, if the North Coast Water Board determines it necessary.

Comment letters to the State Water Board must be received by 12 p.m. on November 1, 2006. After the November deadline, State Water Board staff will not accept additional written comments unless the State Water Board determines that such comments should be accepted. Please send comments on the proposed amendment to: Song Her, Clerk to the Board, by email at (commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov), (916) 341-5620 (fax), or addressed to State Water Resources Control Board, 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Please also indicate in the subject line, "Comment Letter - Shasta River Watershed DO and Temperature TMDLs."

Please direct questions about this notice to Michael Buckman, Division of Water Quality, at (916) 341-5479 or (mbuckman@waterboards.ca.gov) or Senior Staff Counsel Steven H. Blum at (916) 341-5177 or (sblum@waterboards.ca.gov).

October 12, 2006
Date



Song Her
Clerk to the Board