

MINUTES OF THE
BIG BEAR LAKE TMDL TASK FORCE MEETING

September 23, 2009

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Participant</u>
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Heather Boyd
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Michael Perez
San Bernardino County SW Program	Matt Yeager
California Department of Transportation	Gian Villareal (RBF)
San Bernardino County SW Program	Ed Varga
US Forest Service	Robert Taylor
California Department of Transportation	Cathy Jochai
Floating Islands West	Darrell Smith
Big Bear Mountain Resorts	Karl Klouzer
Brown and Caldwell	Nancy Gardiner
Risk Sciences	Tim Moore
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority	Rick Whetsel
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority	Regina Patterson

Call to Order & Introductions

Big Bear Lake TMDL Task Force meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. at San Bernardino County Public Works, 825 East Third Street, San Bernardino, California.

Approval of August 5, 2009 Minutes

The August 5, 2009, Big Bear Lake TMDL Task Force meeting minutes were presented for approval. Hearing no comments, the meeting minutes were received and filed as presented. He reported SAWPA's website is being updated with links to the Regional Board documents, and tabs to access agendas, meeting notes, handouts, agreements, budget, schedule and reports.

Update: Task Force Administration – TMDL Schedule of Deliverables and Budget Review

Rick Whetsel provided an update to the TMDL Implementation Plan Schedule and Budget Summary reporting most of the invoices for the 2008-09 budget have been received and paid, with the exception of Brown and Caldwell's 2008-09 monitoring program and work on the QAPP. Once the invoices have been submitted by San Bernardino County Flood Control, he will determine the final carryover amount. CalTrans is working on getting invoices. Payment has been received from Big Bear Mountain Resorts. Based upon a review of the budget data, the Task Force should have sufficient funds to cover all of the budgeted work for FY 2009-10. To cover the past costs incurred by Big Bear MWD to fund the Task Force, prior to the finalization of the Task Force Agreement, a reimbursement check for the 2007-08 costs has been sent to Big Bear MWD by SAWPA.

Status Update: Watershed-Wide Nutrient Monitoring Program – Draft Monitoring Plan and QAPP, Field Training Schedule (Brown and Caldwell)

Field Training and Monitoring Plan – Nancy Gardiner provided a presentation on “Tributary Monitor Training” reporting the objectives, background, sampling protocols (locations/sites), QA/QC documentation, lab coordination, health and safety, personnel expectations. She provided photos and discussed field training and “shadowing” stating that for each of the monitoring sites, all spring and summer, she and her staff have experienced nothing but low flows. Mr. Whetsel asked what the total sample volume being collected at any one interval? Mr. Gardiner said 12 bottles were filled per site. There are three 1 liter poly bottles and we have to collect one 500 mil with sulfuric acid and six glass vials with three preserved with sulfuric acid and three are unpreserved and a 1 liter amber glass bottle. The samplers were instructed to get the sample if they

have unobstructed flow or enough water to dip it to get a sample without stirring up sediment. It takes time to fill the bottles correctly and even more time when doing QA/QC samples.

Dry weather sampling was on July 9th and August 27th. In July there was no access to the Bear Creek outlet due to CalTrans construction. Jim Weber at the water district made special arrangements to allow for safe access to the Bear Creek outlet site in August. CalTrans has constructed a platform at the Bear Creek outlet and the sampling point is under the platform with a 45 degree slope. It is a great place to sample once you're there. After further discussion the Task Force decided to stop monitoring at the Bear Creek outlet site until construction was complete, due the possible contamination of water quality due to construction.

Assuming we're using Babcock for laboratory analysis (and not shipping all samples to Colorado), there is a need for delivery and shipping so we may need to arrange for courier services. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District has offered to assist in conducting dry sampling in non-dry conditions only. Multiple agencies want to conduct sampling as an "in-kind" contribution, with regard to this, note that the calibration requirements are extensive and time consuming. Overall, training was successful.

Following discussion on rain event pH sampling, Ms. Gardiner said she would like to get help from the local trained staff and proposed to have a complete set of bottles with coolers in a central location with trained local staff on call, who could be prepared to go out and take the first sample until her staff arrives. If it starts raining mobilization should be immediate.

Mr. Whetsel stated that the Task Force has authorized Brown and Caldwell to be the lead in this effort and to utilize Resort and Forest Service staff as needed for those local storm events.

Cathy Jochai proposed that her trained staff do the dry weather sampling at Bear Creek and perform the courier service. It would be better for them to provide coordination because of their training in construction site safety procedures.

Revised QAPP – Ms. Gardiner asked that the Regional Board provide direction for the laboratory issues and target reporting limits that have to be met because everyone is interested in collecting good data to get information that will be useful in tackling the modeling efforts. Heather Boyd said the Regional Board specified certain sampling points and certain constituents in the TMDL based on our knowledge. It was left open in the TMDL for the stakeholders to decide sampling locations and sampling constituents as long as it met certain objectives. She suggested looking at the objectives of the sampling program in the monitoring plan like collecting data to develop wasteload and load allocations for wet and average years, and reviewing the wasteload and load allocations in TMDLs for this dry hydrological condition. When developing the TRLs you have to look at what will allow you to meet those objectives outlined in the monitoring plan. The limits provided for SWAMP are written in the 2008 QAPP.

Discussion of nutrient limits ensued and Matt Yeager asked if creek monitoring is being done to do a TMDL, a 303(d) listing, or an impairment verification, would there have to be more than one sample location? Ms. Boyd said when sites at Rathbun Creek, Summit Creek and Grout Creek were looked at, the beneficial use assessment policy states that each has to be 200 meters apart for it to be considered separate data. They also have to be representative of the condition in the creek. Grout Creek may show non-detect for nutrients and phosphorous. When developing the model it generally looks at the storm events. We have historical data for snow melt and base flow for those creeks, but not a lot of data over the hydrograph for storm events. The Regional Board wants your objectives to be met, however you choose to meet them.

After discussing which samples to send to which laboratory, Mr. Whetsel recommended proposing to send the nutrient samples along with the prepared blind samples to GEI in Colorado and during dry weather all other constituents would be sent to Babcock. Ms. Boyd suggested considering the cost and starting with only the dry weather nutrient samples being sent to GEI and not sending storm samples. She said she would like

to see the data when it comes in to make sure all the QA/QC (blanks, duplicates and calibration standards) are being run for the samples.

The Task Force will come back to Ms. Boyd with a procedure and details about how this will be done and who will prepare it. Mr. Moore will contact SCCWRP and Jeff Mosher at NWRI.

Status Update - Big Bear Lake Management Plan

Mr. Moore provided excerpts from San Bernardino County's MS4 Permit and reported that all written comments have been submitted but that in approximately the third week in August the critical issue "anti-backsliding" arose. This means that once you have a numeric effluent limit in a permit, by in large it is difficult to get a less stringent limit adopted except under specific circumstances. The wasteload allocations for the Big Bear Lake TMDL and the Middle Santa Ana TMDL were both placed in the MS4 draft permit as numeric effluent limits (water quality based effluent limits). This is contrary to what the TMDL basin planning staff indicated would happen when the TMDL was adopted. Ms. Boyd said the wasteload allocations could be specified, but not under the water quality effluent limitation because they are not water quality criteria.

Mr. Moore said the Regional Board has the authority to do this if they elect to and it is something that came up when the TMDL was adopted. Unexpectedly, when the permit came out and had the load allocations as numeric effluent limits and the targets were listed for Big Bear. The permit is what must be complied with. The issue is crossing multiple task forces. He referred to footnote "a" on page 48 of the handout that states "Compliance with the in-lake targets to be achieved as soon as possible, but no later than the dates specified." The word "compliance" in this context means to hit the number by this date. In addition, if this value (35 ug/L) is installed in the permit as a numeric effluent, and we decide later that the right number should be 50, we can make those changes to water quality standards but the permit limit would stay at 35 ug/L, because changes in water quality standards explicitly are not one of the exceptions to the anti-backsliding provisions. This is a problem that the Regional Board staff is aware of. He discussed other complexities about the permit referring to paragraph "g" on page 23 that says if it does not specify nutrient reductions for external loads, external load dischargers are responsible for reducing their contribution to the internal nutrient loads. The TMDL requires a 60 percent reduction in the internal nutrient load to achieve compliance. He discussed paragraphs B and C on page 6. We sent comments and the EPA commented too. A letter was written to the Regional Board from EPA stating that they disagree with the BMP approach.

Mr. Moore presented "Options for Reducing Nutrient Loads from In-Lake Sediments" listing the following six options 1) Aquatic vegetation management; 2) Expand aeration/oxygenation systems; 3) Carp removal; 4) Increase dilution; 5) Large-scale dredging; and 6) Large-scale alum application. Items 1 through 3 are all things we are doing, but we are not close to providing reasonable assurance of attainment of the water quality standards. As a group we believe we are doing everything we can and need to be doing. Maintenance dredging is being done and a general permit is anticipated for the lake to facilitate as a mitigation strategy. Aluminum works and provides a benefit as a temporary solution. Mr. Moore will print and email the Plan for discussion.

Status Update - Mercury TMDL

Michael Perez reported a response has been received from AQMD, Mojave and Kern. The AQMD has been asked to look at possible EIRs for facility contamination to help quantify amounts that are being contributed from their permittees.

303(d) Listings and Watershed Action Plan

Mr. Moore reported the Regional Board has posted notice of new 303(d) listing action coming for this year's cycle.

Other

Mr. Moore recommended the Task Force to stay closely informed about the MS4 permitting process for San Bernardino County. We may want to file comments and attend the hearing if that permit affects this Task Force and your compliance.

Ms. Boyd reported the State Board passed a resolution stating the State Boards will work with the Regional Boards to develop a waiver of waste discharge requirements to address activities on U.S. Forest Service land. We will probably not write a separate waste discharge requirement for this. The web link will be provided to SAWPA.

Future Scheduled Meeting

The next Big Bear Lake TMDL Task Force meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, at 9:00 a.m. at San Bernardino County Public Works located at 825 E. Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415.

Adjournment

There being no further business for review, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Handout(s)

1. Implementation Plan/Schedule
2. Task Force Budget
3. Draft Final BBL Watershed-wide Nutrient TMDL Monitoring QA Project Plan 8/31/09 – Brown and Caldwell (sections 4, 5 and 13)
4. Comments and Response to Docs to Address RWQCB Comments on BB Lake QAPP
5. Memo – RWQCB re Revised QAPP
6. Excerpts from San Bernardino County's MS-4 Permit
7. Options for Reducing Nutrient Loads from In-Lake Sediments