

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

RESOLUTION NO. R5-2002-0207

AMENDING THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN
FOR
THE SACRAMENTO RIVER AND SAN JOAQUIN RIVER BASINS
FOR THE CONTROL OF MERCURY IN CLEAR LAKE

WHEREAS, in 1975 California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, (hereafter Regional Board) adopted a Water Quality Control Plan (hereafter Basin Plan) for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins, which has been amended occasionally; and

WHEREAS, the Basin Plan may be amended in accordance with the California Water Code Section 13240, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, Water Code Section 13241 requires the Regional Board to establish water quality objectives and Section 13242 requires a program for implementation for achieving water quality objectives; and

WHEREAS, Clear Lake has been identified under the federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d) as an impaired waterbody due to elevated concentrations of methylmercury in fish tissue and the existence of a fish consumption advisory; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Board recognizes that the Basin Plan does not include numeric water quality objectives for mercury nor a plan to reduce mercury concentrations in Clear Lake therefore a Basin Plan amendment is required; and

WHEREAS, Regional Board staff have developed a water quality management strategy to reduce the concentrations of methylmercury in fish tissue that is based on reducing the overall mercury loads to Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment modifies Basin Plan Chapter II (Existing and Potential Beneficial Uses) to include commercial and sport fishing as a beneficial use designation for Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment modifies Basin Plan Chapter III (Water Quality Objectives) to establish a site-specific numeric objective for methylmercury in fish in Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment modifies Basin Plan Chapter IV (Implementation) to establish a water quality management strategy to reduce mercury loads into Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment modifies Basin Plan Chapter V (Surveillance and Monitoring) to include a water, sediment, and fish tissue monitoring program to monitor progress in achieving mercury concentration reductions; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to develop and implement a plan to reduce bioavailable mercury loads from the Sulfur Bank Mercury Mine and sediments of Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment requires federal, state, and local agencies to develop monitoring and implementation plans to reduce mercury loads from tributary waters to Clear Lake; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Board has considered the costs of implementing the proposed amendment, and finds these costs to be reasonable relative to the water quality benefits derived from implementing the proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, Regional Board staff developed a report for public comment and peer review and held a public workshop on 22 May 2002, and the Regional Board considered an informational item on 6 June 2002 and held a public hearing on 6 September 2002 to consider the proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, The basin planning process has been certified as “functionally equivalent” to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for preparing environmental documents and is, therefore, exempt from those requirements (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.); and

WHEREAS, Regional Board staff has circulated a Notice of Public Hearing, Notice of Filing, a written staff report, an environmental checklist, and a draft proposed amendment to interested individuals and public agencies for review and comment in accordance with state and federal environmental regulations (23 CCR Section 3775, 40 CFR 25, and 40 CFR 131); and

WHEREAS, Regional Board staff completed an environmental checklist and functional equivalent document in compliance with the provisions of CEQA that concluded that the proposed amendment will have no potential for adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on wildlife or the environment; and

WHEREAS, a Basin Plan amendment must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board, the Office of Administrative Law, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency before becoming effective; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment will not result in degradation of Clear Lake water quality with respect to water quality currently achieved or provided for in the water

body and maintains the level of water quality necessary to protect existing and anticipated beneficial use; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment is consistent with the State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 68-16, in that the changes to water quality objectives (i) consider maximum benefits to the people of the state, (ii) will not unreasonably affect present and anticipated beneficial use of waters, and (iii) will not result in water quality less than that prescribed in policies. Likewise, the proposed amendment is consistent with the federal Antidegradation Policy (40 CFR 131.12); and

WHEREAS, this regulatory action meets the “Necessity” standard of the Administrative Procedures Act, Government Code, section 11353, subdivision (b):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Regional Board certifies the staff report and environmental checklist as a functional equivalent document under CEQA for the Basin Plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, pursuant to sections 13240, et seq. of the California Water Code, the Regional Board, after considering the entire record, including oral testimony at the hearing, hereby approves the staff report and adopts an amendment to the Basin Plan to include commercial and sport fishing as a beneficial use, to establish a site-specific numeric water quality objective for methylmercury, and to establish a water quality management strategy to reduce mercury loads for Clear Lake as set forth in Attachment 1; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Officer is directed to forward copies of the Basin Plan amendment to the State Water Resources Control Board in accordance with the requirements of Section 13245 of the California Water Code; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Regional Board requests that the State Water Resources Control Board approve the Basin Plan amendment in accordance with the requirements of Sections 13245 and 13246 of the California Water Code and forward it to the Office of Administrative Law and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, if during its approval process the State Water Resources Control Board, or Office of Administrative Law, or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determines that minor, non-substantive corrections to the language of the amendment are needed for clarity or consistency, the Executive Officer may make such changes, and shall inform the Regional Board of any such changes; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Executive Officer is authorized to sign a Certificate of Fee Exemption and following approval of the Basin Plan amendment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency submit this Certificate in lieu of payment of the Department of Fish and Game filing fee to the Secretary for Resources; and be it further

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RESOLVED, following approval of the Basin Plan amendment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Executive Officer shall file a Notice of Decision with the State Clearinghouse.

I, THOMAS R. PINKOS, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the forgoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, on 6 December 2002.

/s/

THOMAS R. PINKOS, Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT 1
RESOLUTION NO. R5-2002-0207
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Revise Chapter II (Existing and Potential Beneficial Uses), Table II-1 to add a footnote for Clear Lake:

Clear Lake (a)

Footnote: (a) Clear Lake: COMM

Revise Chapter III (Water Quality Objectives) to add:

Methylmercury

For Clear Lake (53), the methylmercury concentration in fish tissue shall not exceed 0.09 and 0.19 mg methylmercury/kg wet weight of tissue in trophic level 3 and 4 fish, respectively. Compliance with these objectives shall be determined by analysis of fish tissue as described in Chapter V, Surveillance and Monitoring.

Revise Chapter IV (Implementation) to add:

Mercury Discharges in the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins

Mercury problems are evident region-wide. The main concern with mercury is that, like selenium, it bioaccumulates in aquatic systems to levels that are harmful to fish and their predators. Health advisories have been issued which recommend limiting consumption of fish taken from the Bay/Delta, Clear Lake, Lake Berryessa, Black Butte Reservoir, Lake Pillsbury, and Marsh Creek Reservoir. Concentrations of mercury in ~~Other~~ water bodies approach or exceed National Academy of Science (NAS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and/or U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines for wildlife and human protection, ~~respectively~~. In addition to these concerns, fish-eating birds taken from some bodies of water in the Basins have levels of mercury that can be expected to cause toxic effects. Bird-kills from mercury also have been documented in Lake Berryessa. (There is also concern for birds in the Delta, but no studies have been completed.) The Regional Water Board has done a preliminary assessment of the mercury situation in the Central Valley Region and concluded that the problem is serious and remedies will be complex and expensive.

The short-term strategy is to concentrate on correcting problems at upstream sites while monitoring the Delta to see whether upstream control activities measurably benefit the Delta. The Regional Water Board will support efforts to fund the detailed studies necessary to define assimilative capacity and to fully define uptake mechanisms in the biota.

~~An abatement study was completed for Clear Lake in 1990. The study identified abatement measures at Sulfur Bank Mine that are now being implemented as part of a USEPA~~

~~Superfund project.~~ In the next few years monitoring is scheduled to be done in the Delta and at upstream sources. The Regional Water Board will continue to support efforts to study how mercury is cycled through the Delta and to further characterize upstream sources.

Clear Lake Mercury

The Regional Water Board has a goal to reduce methylmercury concentrations in Clear Lake fish by reducing total mercury loads from various sources within the Clear Lake watershed.

Sources of mercury include past and present discharges from the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine (SBMM) site, small mercury mines and geothermal sources, natural and anthropogenic erosion of soils with naturally occurring mercury, and atmospheric deposition. The goal of the Clear Lake mercury management strategy is to reduce fish tissue methylmercury concentrations by 60% of existing levels. This will be accomplished by reducing the concentration of total mercury in the surficial layer of lakebed sediment by 70% of existing levels and by further investigation and reduction of other mercury sources believed to have a high potential for mercury methylation. Through a complex process, total mercury is methylated and becomes bioavailable to organisms in the food web. The linkage between (1) the total mercury in the sediments derived from various sources and other sources of total mercury and (2) the concentration of methylmercury in ecological receptors, is complicated and subject to uncertainty. As additional information about these relationships becomes available, the Regional Water Board will revise and refine as appropriate the load allocation and implementation strategy to achieve fish tissue objectives.

Mercury Load Allocations

The strategy for meeting the fish tissue objectives is to reduce the inputs of mercury to the lake from tributaries and the SBMM site, combined with active and passive remediation of contaminated lake sediments. The load allocations for Clear Lake will result in a reduction in the overall mercury sediment concentration by 70% of existing concentrations. The load allocations are assigned to the active sediment layer of the lakebed, the SBMM terrestrial site, the tributary creeks and surface water runoff to Clear Lake, and atmospheric deposition. Table IV-5 summarizes the load allocations. The load allocation to the active sediment layer is expressed as reducing concentrations of total mercury in the active sediment layer to 30% of current concentrations. The load allocation to the SBMM terrestrial site is 5% of the ongoing loads from the terrestrial mine site. The load allocation for the mine also includes reducing mercury concentrations in surficial sediment to achieve the sediment compliance goals for Oaks Arm shown in Table IV-6. The load allocation to tributary and surface water runoff is 80% of existing loads. These load allocations account for seasonal variation in mercury loads, which vary with water flow and rainfall. The analysis includes an implicit margin of safety in the reference doses for methylmercury that were used to develop the fish tissue objectives. It also includes an explicit margin of safety of 10% to account for uncertainty in the relationship between fish tissue concentrations and loads of total mercury. The reductions in loads of total mercury from all sources are expected to result in attainment of water quality objectives.

TABLE IV-5
MERCURY LOAD ALLOCATIONS

<u>Mercury Source</u>	<u>Allocation</u>
<u>Clear Lake</u>	<u>30% of existing</u>
<u>Sediment</u>	<u>concentration</u>
<u>Sulphur Bank</u>	<u>5% of existing load</u>
<u>Mine</u>	
<u>Tributaries</u>	<u>80% of existing load</u>
<u>Atmosphere</u>	<u>No change</u>

Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine

Reducing mercury concentrations in surficial sediment by 70% is an overall goal for the entire lake. To achieve water quality objectives, extremely high levels of mercury in the eastern end of Oaks Arm near SBMM must be reduced by more than 70%. To evaluate progress in lowering sediment concentrations, the following sediment compliance goals are established at sites that have been sampled previously.

TABLE IV-6
SEDIMENT COMPLIANCE GOALS FOR MERCURY IN CLEAR LAKE

<u>Site Designation</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Sediment Mercury Goal (a) (mg/kg dry weight)</u>
<u>Upper Arm</u> <u>UA-03</u>	<u>Center of Upper Arm</u> <u>on transect from</u> <u>Lakeport to Lucerne</u>	<u>0.8</u>
<u>Lower Arm</u> <u>LA-03</u>	<u>Center of Lower Arm,</u> <u>North and west of</u> <u>Monitor Point</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Oaks Arm</u>		
<u>OA-01 (c)</u>	<u>0.3 km from SBMM</u>	<u>16 (b)</u>
<u>OA-02 (c)</u>	<u>0.8 km from SBMM</u>	<u>16 (b)</u>
<u>OA-03 (c)</u>	<u>1.8 km from SBMM</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>OA-04 (c)</u>	<u>3 km from SBMM</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Narrows O1</u>	<u>7.7 km from SBMM</u>	<u>3</u>

- (a) Sediment goals are 30% of existing concentrations. Existing concentrations are taken as the average mercury concentrations in samples collected in 1996-2000 (Clear Lake Basin Plan Amendment Staff Report).
- (a) (b) Due to the exceptionally high concentrations existing at the eastern end of Oaks Arm, sediment goals at OA-01 and OA-02 are not 70% of existing concentrations. These goals are equal to the sediment goal established for OA-03.
- (c) Sediment goal is part of the load allocation for SBMM.

Current and past releases from the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine are a significant source of total mercury loading to Clear Lake. Ongoing annual loads from the terrestrial mine site to the lakebed sediments occur through groundwater, surface water, and atmospheric routes. Loads from ongoing releases from the terrestrial mine site should be

reduced to 5% of existing inputs. Because of its high potential for methylation relative to mercury in lakebed sediments, mercury entering the lake through groundwater from the mine site should be reduced to 0.5 kg/year.

Past releases from the mine site are a current source of exposure through remobilization of mercury that exists in the lakebed sediments as a result of past releases to the lake from the terrestrial mine site. Past active mining operations, erosion and other mercury transport processes at SBMM have contaminated sediment in Oaks Arm. The load allocation assigned to SBMM includes reducing surficial sediment concentrations in Oaks Arm by 70% (more at sites nearest the mine site) to meet the sediment compliance goals in Table IV-6.

In 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) placed Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine on the National Priorities List under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). The USEPA has already performed remediation actions to stabilize waste rock piles, reduce erosion, and control surface water on the site.

Estimates of the current annual loads from the terrestrial mine site to the surficial lakebed sediment are under investigation. Existing data indicate that loads of total mercury from the terrestrial mine site are within a broad range of 1 to 568 kg mercury per year. New data may be used to refine the load estimates as discussed below. As part of verifying compliance with the load allocations, remediation activities to address current and past releases from SBMM should be conducted to meet the sediment compliance goals listed in Table IV-6 for sediments within one kilometer of the mine site, specifically at sites OA-01 and OA-02.

The Regional Water Board anticipates that fish tissue objectives for mercury will not be met unless the load reductions from Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine are attained. The Regional Water Board will request that USEPA continue remediation activities on the mine site and prepare an implementation plan or plans that address the following: reduction of ongoing releases of mercury from the SBMM site through surface water, groundwater, and the atmosphere; necessary remediation for mercury in lakebed sediments previously deposited through mining, erosion, and other processes at the mine site; and monitoring and review activities. The implementation plans should provide interim sediment goals and explain how control actions will assist in achieving fish tissue objectives for mercury in Clear Lake. The Regional Water Board will request that USEPA submit remediation plans for Regional Board approval for the SBMM site within eight years after the effective date of this amendment and implement the plan two years thereafter. USEPA should complete remediation activities at the mine site and active lakebed sediment remediation within ten years of plan implementation.

USEPA anticipates implementing additional actions to address the ongoing surface and groundwater releases from the SBMM over the next several years. These actions are expected to lead to significant reductions in the ongoing releases from the mine pit, the mine waste piles and other ongoing sources of mercury releases from the terrestrial mine site. USEPA also currently plans to investigate what steps are appropriate under CERCLA to address the existing contamination in the lakebed sediments due to past releases from the SBMM. Regional Water Board staff will continue to work closely with the USEPA on these important activities. In addition, Regional Water Board staff will coordinate monitoring

activities to investigate other sources of mercury loads to Clear Lake. These investigations by USEPA and the Regional Water Board should reduce the uncertainty that currently exists regarding the annual load of total mercury to the lake, the contribution of each source to that load, and the degree to which those sources lead to methylmercury exposure to and mercury uptake by fish in the lake. This information should lead to more refined decisions about what additional steps are appropriate and feasible to achieve the applicable water quality criteria.

The sediment compliance goals for Oaks Arm will require USEPA to address both (1) the ongoing releases from the terrestrial mine site and (2) the load of total mercury that currently exists in the active lakebed sediment layer as a result of past releases. Potential options to control the ongoing releases of mercury from the terrestrial mine site include: remediation of onsite waste rock, tailings and ore piles to minimize the erosion of mercury contaminated sediments into the lake; diversion of surface water run-on away from waste piles and the inactive mine pit; control and containment or treatment of surface water runoff; control of groundwater flow into Clear Lake; and reduction of mercury flux from the mine waste piles into the atmosphere.

Meeting the load allocation for the lakebed sediment will require remediation of contaminated sediment. Potential options to address the mercury that currently exists in the lakebed as a result of past releases and is being remobilized may include dredging the contaminated sediment, capping with clean sediments, facilitating natural burial of highly contaminated sediments, or reducing the transport of highly contaminated sediments from the Oaks Arm into the rest of the lake. Monitoring to assess progress toward meeting the load reduction goals from Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine should be planned and conducted as part of specific remediation activities. Baselines for mercury loads from the various ongoing inputs from the mine site should be established in order to evaluate successes of the remediation activities.

In order to refine the load estimates from SBMM, the Regional Water Board recommends that USEPA determine the following information: mercury concentrations and sediment deposition rates for sediment cores collected near the mine site; characterization of porewater in sediments near the mine site to determine sources, magnitude and impacts of mercury-containing fluids/groundwater entering the lake; estimates of total surface water and groundwater fluxes of mercury from SBMM, including transport through the wetlands north of the site; and patterns of sediment transport and deposition within the lake.

If additional information reveals that reaching the 95% reduction in mercury loads from the terrestrial mine site is technically infeasible or cost prohibitive, or otherwise not technically justified, the Regional Water Board will consider internal adjustments to the SBMM load allocation. It may be possible to adjust the allocation among the terrestrial site and the contaminated sediments associated with the SBMM, provided the internal reallocation achieves the same overall reduction in loads from mine-related sources (terrestrial mine site and ongoing contributions from highly contaminated sediments). Any internal adjustment must achieve the sediment compliance goals in the east end of Oaks Arm.

Although USEPA is currently spending public funds to address the releases from the SBMM, the owner of SBMM is the party that is legally responsible for addressing the past, current and future releases from the SBMM and for developing implementation plans, implementing

control activities that result in achievement of the load reduction, and performing monitoring to verify the load reduction.

Tributaries and Surface Water Runoff

Past and current loads of total mercury from the tributaries and direct surface water runoff are also a source of mercury loading to the lake and to the active sediment layer in the lakebed. This section excludes loads from surface water runoff associated with the SBMM because those are addressed separately above. The loads of total mercury from the tributaries and surface water runoff to Clear Lake should be reduced by 20% of existing levels. In an average water year, existing loads are estimated to be 18 kg/year. Loads range from 1 to 60 kg/year, depending upon water flow rates and other factors. The load allocation applies to tributary inputs as a whole, instead of to individual tributaries. Efforts should be focused on identifying and controlling inputs from hot spots. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, other land management agencies in the Clear Lake Basin, and Lake County shall submit plans for monitoring and implementation to achieve the necessary load reductions. The Regional Water Board will coordinate with the above named agencies and other interested parties to develop the monitoring and implementation plans. The purpose of the monitoring shall be to refine load estimates and identify potential hot spots of mercury loading from tributaries or direct surface runoff into Clear Lake. Hot spots may include erosion of soils with concentrations of mercury above the average for the rest of the tributary. If significant sources are identified, the Regional Water Board will coordinate with the agencies to develop and implement load reductions. The implementation plans shall include a summation of existing erosion control efforts and a discussion of feasibility and proposed actions to control loads from identified hot spots. The agencies will provide monitoring and implementation plans within five years after the effective date of this amendment and implement load reduction plans within five years thereafter. The goal is to complete the load reductions within ten years of implementation plan approval.

Regional Water Board staff will work with the Native American Tribes in the Clear Lake watershed on mercury reduction programs for the tributaries and surface water runoff. Staff will solicit the Tribe's participation in the development of monitoring and implementation plans.

Wetlands

The Regional Water Board is concerned about the potential for wetland areas to be significant sources of methylmercury. Loads and fate of methylmercury from wetlands that drain to Clear Lake are not fully understood. The potential for production of methylmercury should be assessed during the planning of any wetlands or floodplain restoration projects within the Clear Lake watershed. The Regional Water Board establishes a goal of no significant increases of methylmercury to Clear Lake resulting from such activities. As factors contributing to mercury methylation are better understood, the possible control of existing methylmercury production within tributary watersheds should be examined.

Atmospheric Deposition

Atmospheric loads of mercury originating outside of the Clear Lake watershed and depositing locally are minimal. Global and regional atmospheric inputs of mercury are not under the jurisdiction of the Regional Water Board. Loads of mercury from outside of the Clear Lake

watershed and depositing from air onto the lake surface are established at the existing input rate, which is estimated to be 1 to 2 kg/year.

Public Education

An important component of the Clear Lake mercury strategy is public education. Until the effects of all mercury reduction efforts are reflected in fish tissue levels, the public needs to be continually informed about safe fish consumption levels. The Lake County Public Health Department will provide outreach and education to the community, emphasizing portions of the population that are at risk, such as pregnant women and children. Education efforts may include recommendations to eat smaller fish and species having lower mercury concentrations.

Monitoring and Review

The monitoring plan for Clear Lake will determine whether mercury loads have been reduced to meet sediment compliance goals and fish tissue objectives. Monitoring will include fish tissue, water and sediment sampling. The Regional Water Board will oversee the preparation of detailed monitoring plans and resources to conduct monitoring of sediment, water and fish to assess progress toward meeting the water quality objectives. Chapter V, Surveillance and Monitoring, provides details for monitoring in Clear Lake.

The Regional Water Board will review the progress toward meeting the fish tissue objectives for Clear Lake every five years. The review will be timed to coincide with the five-year review to be conducted by USEPA for the Record of Decision for the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine Superfund Site. The Clear Lake mercury management strategy was developed with existing information. The Regional Water Board recognizes that there are uncertainties with the load estimates and the correlation between reductions in loads of total mercury, methylmercury uptake by biota, and fish tissue concentrations. Regional Water Board staff will consider any new data to refine load estimates and allocations from sources within the Clear Lake watershed. Estimates of existing loads from SBMM or the tributaries will be refined during the review process. If new data indicate that the linkage analysis or load allocations will not result in attainment of the fish tissue objectives, or the fish tissue objectives or load allocations require adjustment, revisions to the Basin Plan will be proposed.

Revise Chapter IV (Surveillance and Monitoring) to add:

Clear Lake Methylmercury

The Regional Water Board will use the following criteria to determine compliance with the methylmercury fish tissue objectives in Clear Lake. Mercury will be measured in fish of the species and sizes consumed by humans and wildlife. The objectives are based on the average of methylmercury concentrations in muscle tissue of trophic level 3 and 4 fish. Because greater than 85% of total mercury in muscle tissue of fish of these sizes is methylmercury, analysis of muscle tissue for total mercury is acceptable for assessing compliance.

Fish from the following species will be collected and analyzed every ten years. The representative fish species for trophic level 4 shall be largemouth bass (total length 300-400 mm), catfish (total length 300 – 400 mm), brown bullhead (total length 300-400 mm), and

crappie (total length 200-300 mm). The representative fish species for trophic level 3 shall be carp, hitch, Sacramento blackfish, black bullhead, and bluegill of all sizes; and brown bullhead and catfish of lengths less than the trophic level 4 lengths.

Fish tissue mercury concentrations are not expected to respond quickly to remediation activities at Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine, Clear Lake sediments, or the tributaries. Adult fish integrate methylmercury over a lifetime and load reduction efforts are not expected to be discernable for more than five years after remediation efforts. Therefore to assess remedial activities, part of the monitoring at Clear Lake will include indicator species, consisting of inland silversides and largemouth bass less than one year old, to be sampled every five years. Juveniles of these species will reflect recent exposure to methylmercury and can be indicators of mercury reduction efforts.

Average concentrations of methylmercury by trophic level should be determined in a combination of the identified species collected throughout Clear Lake. The number of fish collected to determine compliance with this objective will be based on the statistical variance within each species. The sample size will be determined by methods described in USEPA's Guidance for Assessing Chemical Contaminant Data for Use in Fish or other statistical methods approved by the Executive Officer.

Total mercury in tributary sediment, lake sediment, and water will be monitored to determine whether loads have decreased. The water and sediment monitoring frequency will be every five years.