



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

JAN 31 2012

Roger Briggs
Executive Officer
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Coast Region
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, California 93401-7906

Dear Mr. Briggs:


Thank you for submitting the Basin Plan Amendment containing the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for fecal coliform impairments for the Lower Salinas River watershed, including Lower Salinas River, Old Salinas River, Tembladero Slough, Salinas Reclamation Canal, Alisal Creek, Gabilan Creek, Natividad Creek, Salinas River Lagoon (North), Santa Rita Creek, Quail Creek, Chualar Creek, and Towne Creek. Based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's review of the TMDL submittal under Clean Water Act (CWA) section 303(d), I have concluded the TMDLs adequately address the pollutants of concern and, upon implementation, will result in attainment of the applicable water quality standards for fecal coliform for Lower Salinas River. All required elements are adequately addressed; therefore, the TMDLs are hereby approved pursuant to CWA section 303(d)(2).

EPA received the State Water Resources Control Board's complete TMDL package for approval on January 5, 2012. The TMDLs include waste load and load allocations as needed, take into consideration seasonal variations and critical conditions, and provide an adequate margin of safety. The State has provided adequate opportunities for public review and comment on the TMDLs, and demonstrated how public comments were considered in the final TMDLs.

The TMDL submittal contains a detailed plan for implementing the TMDLs. Current federal regulations do not define TMDLs as containing implementation plans; therefore, EPA is not taking action on the implementation plan provided with these TMDLs. However, EPA concurs with the State's proposed implementation approaches.

If you have any questions concerning this approval, please call me at (415) 972-3572 or Janet Parrish at (415) 972-3456.

Sincerely,

 31 Jan. 2012
Alexis Strauss
Director, Water Division

cc: Vicky Whitney, State Board