

11.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This chapter describes some of the opportunities that have been made available to the public for comment on and participation in the development of the *Policy to Implement the Water Quality Objectives for Temperature and Action Plans to Address Temperature Impairments in the Mattole, Navarro, and Eel River Watersheds*.

11.1 Temperature Policy Statement Resolution Process

The *Policy Statement for Implementation of the Water Quality Objective for Temperature in the North Coast Region* (policy statement; Resolution No. R1-2012-0013) established the scope and approach of this Policy and directed its incorporation into the Basin Plan. The content of the policy statement is incorporated into this Policy. The Regional Water Board held three public hearings as part of the policy statement adoption process: on September 29, 2011, November 3, 2011, and January 19, 2012. That process included two public comment periods. Additionally, Regional Water Board staff held numerous meetings with stakeholders during that process.

11.2 CEQA Scoping

Regional Water Board staff held CEQA scoping meetings on February 15th, 27th and 28th, 2013, in Santa Rosa, Bayside, and Yreka CA, respectively. Forty-one comments were received in written form, while 59 were received in verbal form at the scoping meetings. Comments were received from five federal, state and local agencies, eight nongovernmental organizations and special-interest groups, and four individuals. See section 9.2.2 for further discussion.

11.3 Presentations to the Regional Water Board

Regional Water Board staff has provided two updates to the Regional Water Board as information items at Regional Water Board meetings. The first of these was on March 15, 2012, and focused on the schedule for the development of this Policy. The second was on June 13, 2013. At that meeting staff presented a broad overview of the history, approach, status, and remaining steps in the process of developing this Policy.

11.4 Other Activities

Regional Water Board staff has taken the opportunity to discuss the development and approach of this Policy at various meetings in 2012 and 2013. Staff has given brief updates and overviews of the Policy at the Eel River Watershed Forum, Cal Fire's Section V Technical Advisory Committee meetings, a Sonoma County Planning Commission meeting, and other similar venues. Additionally, staff organized a meeting with the plaintiffs in the lawsuit that resulted in the Stipulated Agreement (see section 6.1) on May 28, 2013. Staff also organized meetings with environmental advocates on June 26, 2013, Farm Bureau representatives on August 9, 2013, and with forestry advocates on August 13, 2013.

11.5 TMDL Development Process

The development of technical TMDL analyses for the Mattole, Navarro, and Eel River TMDLs included a full public participation process at the time of their development. Each of the processes included at least one public meeting in or near the watershed, as well as a public hearing, public comment solicitation, and responses to comments. The public process for each of these TMDLs is discussed below for completeness. The following discussion paraphrases the public participation discussions contained in the individual TMDLs.

Mattole River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA and Regional Water Board staff held two public meetings in the Mattole River watershed during the public comment period on the draft TMDL. The first was held on November 12, 2002, at the Mattole Grange in Petrolia, and the second was held on November 13, 2002, at the Whitethorn Grange in Whitethorn. Staff from the USEPA and the Regional Water Board staff gave presentations on the content of the draft TMDL and associated Technical Support Document (TSD) and answered questions from the public at those meetings. A legal notice was placed in the Eureka Times-Standard and Humboldt Beacon, which are newspapers of general circulation in the Mattole River watershed. In addition, the public comment period was announced in the Mattole Restoration Council newsletter distributed during the comment period. The USEPA prepared a response for all written comments on the draft TMDLs received during the comment period, as well as the major comments from the informational public meetings. (USEPA 2002a)

Navarro River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft Navarro River temperature TMDL in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, Anderson Valley Advertiser, and Mendocino Beacon, which are newspapers of general circulation in the Navarro River watershed. The USEPA held a public meeting on Tuesday, October 3, 2000, at the Apple Hall Dining Room at the Mendocino County Fairgrounds in Boonville. At the meeting, staff of the USEPA and Regional Water Board described the TMDL and answered questions regarding them. The USEPA prepared a written response to all written comments on the draft TMDL received by EPA during the comment period. In response to comments, the Regional Water Board staff conducted additional technical analysis on the impacts of flow conditions on temperature. A technical addendum was prepared and the draft TMDL was revised. The TMDL established by the USEPA were largely based on the TSD prepared by Regional Water Board staff. Regional Water Board staff provided for public participation in the development of the TSD through meetings, presentations, and a newsletter. (USEPA 2000)

South Fork Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA held two public meetings in Garberville, several meetings with interested parties, a public hearing, and responded to public comments through changes to the TMDL and a comment response summary. In addition, USEPA staff participated in a radio show discussing the TMDL. Notices of the availability of the draft TMDL were sent to local newspapers and radio stations, which generated

several newspaper articles in the Eureka Times Standard and Santa Rosa Press Democrat. (USEPA 1999)

North Fork Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft North Fork Eel River temperature TMDL in the Willits News and Santa Rosa Press Democrat, which are of general circulation in Mendocino and Trinity County, as well as to individuals on the Upper Eel Watershed Forum mailing list. The USEPA prepared a written response to all written comments on the draft TMDL received during the comment period. In addition, an informal meeting to discuss the draft TMDL was held on September 18, 2002 in Covelo. (USEPA 2002b)

Middle Fork Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft Middle Fork Eel River Temperature TMDL in the Willits News and Santa Rosa Press Democrat, which are papers of general circulation in Mendocino and Trinity Counties. In addition, the USEPA sent a notice to those on the mailing list of the Upper Eel Watershed Forum. The USEPA held a public meeting on October 16, 2003, in Covelo, California. The USEPA prepared a responsiveness summary that addressed all the comments that were received during the public comment period. (USEPA 2003)

Upper Main Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft Upper Main Eel River Temperature TMDL in the Willits News and Santa Rosa Press Democrat, which are papers of general circulation in Mendocino County. The USEPA also met with PG&E, Friends of the Eel River, and National Marine Fisheries Service during the Fall of 2003. The USEPA held a meeting in Willits during the summer of 2004 for landowners whose land was to be surveyed for the sediment source analysis. The public notice regarding availability of the draft Upper Main Eel TMDL was posted on the USEPA's web site, and mailed or emailed to additional parties. The USEPA prepared a responsiveness summary that addressed all the comments that were received during the public comment period. (USEPA 2004)

Middle Main Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft Middle Main Eel River Temperature TMDL in the Willits News and Eureka Times-Standard, papers of general circulation in Mendocino, Humboldt, and Trinity counties. The USEPA and the Regional Water Board staff also held public meetings in Alderpoint in April and November 2005 to discuss the TMDL. The public notice regarding availability of the draft Middle Main Eel TMDLs was posted on the USEPA's web site and mailed or emailed to additional parties. The USEPA received 3 comments on the draft TMDL and made revisions based upon those comments. (USEPA 2005)

Lower Main Eel River Temperature TMDL

The USEPA placed a public notice of the draft Lower Eel River Temperature TMDL in the Willits News and Eureka Times-Standard, papers of general circulation in

Mendocino and Humboldt counties. The USEPA also discussed the TMDL with various land owners in the watershed, beginning in early 2006. The public notice regarding availability of the draft Lower Eel River TMDL was posted on the USEPA's web site and mailed or emailed to additional parties.

A public meeting on the draft Lower Eel River Temperature TMDL was held on October 22, 2007, at the Six Rivers National Forest conference room in Eureka, California. The USEPA also responded to inquiries for information during the public comment period. The USEPA reviewed all written comments that were received during the public comment period, revised the final TMDL as appropriate, and prepared a responsiveness summary that addresses the comments received. (USEPA 2007)