

## **Project Description**

### **Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Grazing Operators In The Tomales Bay Watershed**

The San Francisco Bay Water Board (Water Board) finds that the discharge of nonpoint source pollution from agricultural grazing operations within the San Francisco Bay Region is considered to be a discharge of waste that could affect the quality of waters of the State, as defined in Section 13260 of the California Water Code (CWC). Potential water quality degradation from such grazing activities has not been regulated prior to this, but the Implementation Plan for the Tomales Bay Pathogen Total Maximum Daily Load (Tomales Bay Pathogen TMDL) adopted by the Water Board on September 21, 2005, and subsequently approved by U.S. EPA on January 10, 2007, requires actions necessary to protect and restore beneficial uses. These actions must be consistent with the State Water Resources Control Board's *2004 Policy for Implementation and Enforcement of the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program* (NPS Policy), which requires that all sources of nonpoint source pollution be regulated through Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR,) through waivers of WDRs, or through prohibitions.

The Water Board intends to adopt a conditional waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements (waiver of WDRs) for existing grazing operations in the Tomales Bay Watershed (Tomales Bay, Lagunitas Creek, Walker Creek, and Olema Creek), pursuant to the requirements of the NPS Policy. The purpose of the waiver of WDRs is to set conditions for implementation of grazing operation management practices that result in improved water quality in receiving waters.

The waiver of WDRs will require that waiver enrollees prepare and execute a nonpoint source pollution control implementation program (NPS pollution control implementation program) that does the following:

- States that the purpose of the plan is such that nonpoint source pollution is addressed in a manner that ultimately achieves and maintains water quality objectives and beneficial uses, including any applicable antidegradation requirements.
- Includes a narrative of the Management Practices (MPs) and other program elements that are expected to be implemented to ensure attainment of the NPS pollution control implementation program's stated purpose(s), the process to be used to select or develop MPs, and the process to be used to ensure and verify proper MP implementation.
- Includes a time schedule to achieve water quality objectives, and corresponding quantifiable milestones designed to measure progress toward reaching the specified objectives. CWC 13242 (b) and 13263 (c), and the NPS Policy recognize that there are instances where it will take time to achieve water quality objectives. The effort may involve all or some of various processes, including: identification of measurable long-term and interim water quality goals; a timeline for achieving these goals; identification and implementation of pollution control MPs; provision(s) for maintenance of the implementation actions, provision(s) for additional actions if initial actions are inadequate; and, in the case of third-party organizations, identification of a responsible third party to lead the efforts.

For the purpose of compliance with the waiver of WDRs, the NPS pollution control implementation program will be referred to as the Ranch Water Quality Plan.

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**Environmental Checklist Form**

1. Project title:  
Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Grazing Operations In The Tomales Bay Watershed (Tomales Bay, Lagunitas Creek, Walker Creek, and Olema Creek) In The San Francisco Bay Region
  
2. Lead agency name and address:  
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400.  
Oakland, CA, 94612
  
3. Contact person and phone number:  
Carmen Fewless 510.622.2316
  
4. Project location:  
Within The following Hydrologic Unit of the San Francisco Bay Region:  
  
Marin Coastal Hydrologic Unit (No. 18050005)
  
5. Project sponsor's name and address:  
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400.  
Oakland, CA, 94612  
Attn: Carmen Fewless
  
6. General plan designation: Not Applicable
7. Zoning: Not Applicable
  
8. Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)  
  
The Water Board intends to adopt a conditional waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for existing grazing operations in the Tomales Bay Watershed (Tomales Bay, Lagunitas Creek, Walker Creek, and Olema Creek), to comply with the Tomales Bay Pathogen TMDL Implementation Plan, that specifies the actions necessary to protect and restore beneficial uses to the Tomales Bay Watershed. These actions shall be consistent with the requirements of the NPS Policy. The purpose of the Waiver is to set conditions for implementation of grazing operation management practices which result in water quality improvements.

Other regulatory options include imposition of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) or enforcement of Basin Plan prohibitions. The Water Board can rescind this Waiver and issue WDRs at any time should verification/feedback mechanisms indicate or demonstrate that the program is failing to achieve its stated objectives.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

The Waiver will cover existing grazing operations in the Tomales Bay Watershed (Tomales Bay, Lagunitas Creek, Walker Creek, and Olema Creek), which is located in coastal Marin County.

Tomales Bay is the geographic heart of the portion of western Marin County that includes the watersheds of Lagunitas, Olema, and Walker creeks. There are hundreds of tributaries associated with these three largest creeks, and the surrounding landscape can be viewed as a vast circulatory system, connecting all the plant, animal, and human inhabitants. Waters flow into Tomales Bay through wildlands, dairy ranches, forests, parks, and human communities. Its upper boundary is made up of coastal ridgelines.

The watershed supplies water, provides recreational opportunities, and supports dairy and beef ranching, farming, agriculture, commercial fishing, and mariculture. The Tomales Bay watershed is home to rich wildlife communities, including nearly 470 species of birds. Coho salmon, steelhead trout, and red-legged frogs are important examples of threatened and endangered species that rely on habitats in the Tomales Bay Watershed area.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

No other public agency approvals are required.

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors marked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology /Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources		Noise		Population / Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- X I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

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Signature

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Date

**EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site,

cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I. AESTHETICS</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
<b>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES:</b> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				
<b>III. AIR QUALITY</b> -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				X
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X
<b>IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X



	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
<b>VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:</b> Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				
<b>VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				X
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
quality?				
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
<b>IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING -</b> Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
<b>X. MINERAL RESOURCES --</b> Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
<b>XI. NOISE:</b> Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
<b>XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING --</b> Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
<b>XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES</b>				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?				X
Police protection?				X
Schools?				X
Parks?				X
Other public facilities?				X
<b>XIV. RECREATION --</b>				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				
<b>XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC --</b> Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				X
<b>XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</b> Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
<b>XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --</b>				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal			X	



	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

## **EXPLANATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

Aesthetics (I. a and c).

Agricultural Resources (II. c).

Hydrology and Water Quality (VIII. a), and

Mandatory Findings of Significance (XVII. a and b)

### **Less Than Significant Impacts**

Aesthetics (I. a and c).

Implementation of improved grazing management practices, such as additional exclusion fencing, hardened livestock water crossings, off-stream livestock watering troughs, etc., may have minor scenic impacts in the Tomales Bay Watershed. Note that grazing facilities currently have some amount of fencing along property borders, separating livestock paddocks, etc., as well as other agricultural management practices implemented on-site.

Agricultural Resources (II. c)

Some of the anticipated grazing management practices to be implemented under the Waiver in order to improve water quality, may result in minor reduction of land available for grazing, such as riparian areas, filter strips or linear wetlands enclosed by exclusion fencing, etc.

Hydrology and Water Quality (VIII. a)

Tomales Bay and its tributaries, Lagunitas, Olema and Walker creeks are listed as water quality impaired for pathogens under Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act. Livestock grazing operations are identified as a source of discharges of pathogens to surface waters in the Tomales Bay Watershed area. Other regulatory mechanisms available to the Water Board include imposition of Waste Discharge Requirements, enforcement of Basin Plan prohibitions, and adoption and implementation of Total Maximum Daily loads (TMDLs).

Mandatory Findings of Significance (XVII.a and b)

Improved grazing management required under the waiver of WDRs may have certain indirect, less than significant impacts that cannot be predicted at this time. Anticipated types of less than significant impacts are short-term in nature such as minor soil disturbance related to construction of trenches associated with pipes connecting to off-stream livestock watering facilities, post holes for new livestock exclusion fencing, soil shaping for new linear wetlands, grassed filter strips, etc. It is anticipated that long-term indirect impacts and cumulative impacts will likely be positive rather than adverse (e.g., improved local and downstream water quality, reduced soil erosion, etc.).