



Heal the Bay

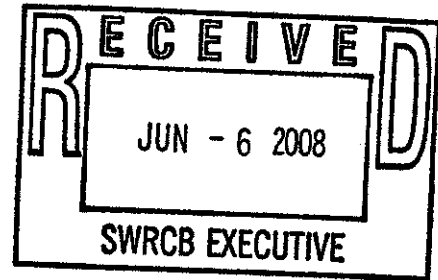
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June 6, 2008

Chairwoman Doduc and Board Members
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: Harbor Beaches of Ventura County (Kiddie Beach and Hobie Beach) Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load

Dear Ms. Doduc and Board Members:

Heal the Bay has actively worked on beach fecal pollution issues for over 15 years. We co-authored the Santa Monica Bay Restorations Project's 1995 epidemiological study; co-authored AB-411 and AB-538, the assembly bills that established California's bacteria health standards for marine beaches and sanitary survey protocols; and actively participate in the State Beach Water Quality Workgroup and the Clean Beach Task Force. For over 15 years, we have published the Beach Report Card, a weekly report card of the bacterial water quality at beaches at over 375 beaches throughout California. We were active participates in the technical committee for the development of the Santa Monica Bay fecal bacteria TMDL, and we have reviewed and commented on every bacteria TMDL in Region IV.

Heal the Bay supports the Harbor Beaches of Ventura County Bacteria TMDL adopted by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board on November 1, 2007 (Resolution No. 2007-017). We believe that implementation of this TMDL will lead to water quality standards attainment. However, we do ask the State Water Resources Control Board to reassess the timeframe for dry weather compliance.

The TMDL requires achievement with dry-weather limits in five years, a whole two years longer that the dry-weather compliance schedule for all of the Santa Monica Bay Beaches. The Ventura Harbor beaches are small beaches located in relatively small watersheds with correspondingly lower numbers of sources. Dry weather compliance should be achievable in three years.

We understand that responsible parties would like to see the results of the circulation project at Cabrillo beach before beginning work on similar projects at their beaches. Although we believe observing the results of other beach cleanup efforts is helpful, this is not a valid reason to hold-up cleanup of these beaches for another two years because: 1) each enclosed beach has unique characteristics that ultimately dictate the design and effectiveness of circulation devices, so while some useful information may be gleaned from the Cabrillo experience, the ultimate success or failure of the Cabrillo project will not dictate whether a similar project should be implemented at the Harbor Beaches, and 2) another circulation project at Baby Beach in Dana Point Harbor has already collected much useful data and can serve as an example. Additionally, the responsible parties have had the benefit of the completed Santa Monica Bay Beaches Bacteria TMDL for over five years. Clearly, the requirements of this TMDL are not unexpected. Heal the Bay urges the Board to revise the dry-weather compliance date to three years.

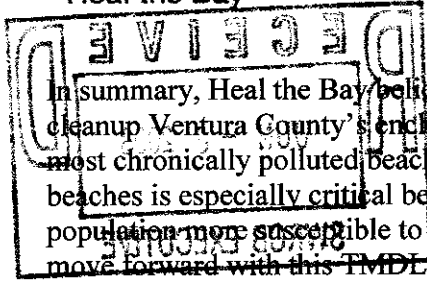


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In summary, Heal the Bay believes this TMDL is a crucial component of the overall effort to cleanup Ventura County's enclosed beaches. In particular, Kiddie's Beach has been one of the most chronically polluted beaches in Southern California. Mitigating fecal pollution at these beaches is especially critical because they attract families with small children, a segment of the population more susceptible to swimming related illnesses. Thus, we urge the State Board to move forward with this TMDL, however, we believe it is imperative that the TMDL be revised to shorten the dry weather compliance schedule to three years.

Sincerely,

Kirsten James
Water Quality Director