



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

OCT 26 2015

Sam Unger  
Executive Officer  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Los Angeles Region  
320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, California 90013

Dear Mr. Unger:

Thank you for submitting the complete Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) Basin Plan Amendment package for the revised Metals in Ballona Creek and Toxic Pollutants in Ballona Creek Estuary Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) on March 16, 2015 for approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We find that all the federal required elements are adequately addressed, and we approve the metals and toxics TMDLs pursuant to CWA section 303(d)(2). The TMDLs, upon complete implementation, will result in attainment of the applicable water quality standards in Ballona Creek and Ballona Creek Estuary.

The Regional Board, State Water Resources Control Board (State Board), and Office of Administrative Law (OAL) took action on the BPA on the following dates:

- Regional Board adoption on December 5, 2013 (Resolution No. R13-010)
- State Board adoption on June 17, 2014 (Resolution No. 2014-0030)
- OAL approval on May 4, 2015 (2015-0320-03S)
- Regional Board signed submittal letter, dated March 16, 2015, to EPA requesting approval of the TMDLs

The State has provided adequate opportunities for public review and comment on the TMDLs and demonstrated how public comments were considered in the final TMDL.

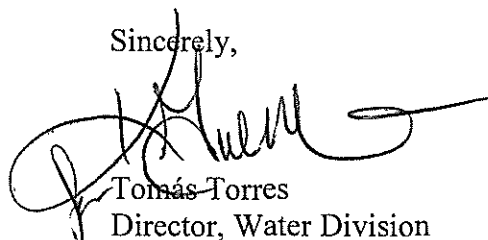
The TMDLs appropriately used an antidegradation approach to develop numeric targets and load and wasteload allocations to protect beneficial uses in the waters identified. The TMDLs include water column numeric targets for copper, lead, and zinc for Ballona Creek, and sediment numeric targets for cadmium, copper, lead, silver, and zinc, and fish tissue targets for chlordane, total DDT, and total PCBs for Ballona Creek Estuary. This revised TMDL evaluated additional flow, hardness, metals, and PAHs data collected since the original TMDLs were completed in 2006 and 2008; as a result, this reconsideration updated certain elements of the TMDL to reflect representative conditions of Ballona Creek and Ballona Creek Estuary.

The TMDL submittal contains the State's implementation strategy and schedule for the TMDL which informed EPA's approval of the TMDL. Implementation of the TMDLs is a critical next step to realize improvements in water quality in the watershed. While EPA is not taking action on the implementation strategy specifically, as we are not required by section 303(d) or its implementing regulations to approve or disapprove implementation plans submitted with TMDLs, we support the State's proposed

implementation approaches to protect and restore water quality, including use of regulatory authorities. We encourage the Regional Board to continue its work with stakeholders to implement these strategies consistent with California's Nonpoint Source Management Plan as approved by EPA under the Clean Water Act Section 319, when appropriate. We remain available to provide support where possible to assist both the regulated community and the Regional Board in fostering ongoing watershed stewardship to achieve the TMDLs.

If you have any questions concerning this approval, please call me at (415) 972-3409, or Cindy Lin (213) 244-1803.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tomás Torres', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tomás Torres  
Director, Water Division

cc: Rik Rasmussen, SWRCB  
Renee Purdy, LARWQCB