



California Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

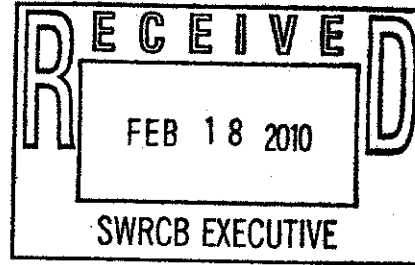
ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor
DONALD KOCH, Director



Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710
(559) 243-4005

February 17, 2010

Mr. Michael Buckman
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814



Subject: Pajaro River Watershed- Fecal Coliform TMDLs

Dear Mr. Buckman:

The California Department of Fish and Game (Department) has reviewed the above document and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed approval of an amendment to the water quality control plan for the general Coast Region (Basin Plan) to (1) Establish Total Maximum Daily Loads for fecal coliform in the Pajaro River Watershed (Including Pajaro River, San Benito River, Llagas Creek, Tequisquita Slough, San Juan Creek, Carnadero/Uvas Creek, Bird Creek, Pescadero Creek, Tres Pinos Creek, Furlong (Jones) Creek, Santa Ana Creek, and Pacheco Creek); (2) Add a domestic animal waste discharge prohibition; and (3) Add a human fecal material discharge prohibition.

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) are a large and diverse group of bacteria. Although most strains of *E. coli* are harmless, others are pathogenic to humans. With the recent outbreaks of *E. coli* O157:H7 in produce from California's Central coastal counties, outbreaks have also been associated with drinking contaminated water. In surface waters, *E. coli* presence is attributed to fecal contamination as a result of run-off from agricultural lands and other urban and residential areas (i.e. septic systems). Fecal contamination can come from untreated sewage or feces from animals such as wildlife, domestic pets, and farm livestock.

The Department supports the amendment as a step to protect against bacterial contamination. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Rachel McNeal, Environmental Scientist, at (559) 243-4014, extension 256.

Sincerely,

to Jeffrey R. Single, Ph.D.
Regional Manager