

MEETING NOTES

Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDL Task Force

March 3, 2025

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:

Abigail Suter, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD	Mike Ali, EVMWD
Aldo Licitra, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD	Natasha Thandi, Caltrans (MBI)
Andy Komor, PACE Engineering	Nicholas Jernack, WSP
Ann Marie Loconte, City of Banning	Odell Tucker, U.S. Forest Service
Art Mullen, City of San Jacinto	Pat Boldt, WRCAC
Ben Foster, City of Lake Elsinore	Rachael Johnson, Riverside County Farm Bureau
Brian Covellone, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Rae Beimer, City of Moreno Valley
Carlos Orellana, March JPA	Ruby Cornejo
Chris Stransky, GEI Consultants	Ryan Kearns, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD
Carlos Norvani, City of Lake Elsinore	Sharon Erb, March JPA
Cynthia Gabaldon, City of Menifee, Perris, San Jacinto, and March JPA	Shirley Colvin, City of Perris
Dan Cortese, City of Hemet	Steven Wolosoff, GEI Consultants
Dustin Christensen, City of Beaumont	Stormy Osifeso, City of Riverside
Garth Engelhorn, NV5	Sudhir Mohleji, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
Hannah Kranz, WSP USA	Terri Reeder, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jagroop Khela, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Tess Dunham, Kahn, Soares & Conway, LLP
Jim Klang, WRCAC	Travis Randel, City of Banning
John Rudolph, GEI Consultants	T Milford Harrison, SAWPA
Kelcey Chung, GEI Consultants	Gil Botello, SAWPA
Kris Hanson, City of Wildomar (Interwest)	Jasmine Hall, SAWPA
Lauren Briggs, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Rachel Gray, SAWPA
Lenai Hunter, EVMWD	Zyanya Ramirez, SAWPA
Liset Hernandez, City of Perris	Rick Whetsel, SAWPA
Lynn Merrill, City of San Jacinto	

Call to Order & Introductions

The Lake Elsinore/Canyon Lake TMDL Task (Task Force) meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Rick Whetsel, with participants participating remotely.

Approval of Meeting Notes from January 15, 2025 Task Force Meeting

The January 15, 2025 meeting notes were approved as posted.

Cynthia Gabaldon requested that the City of San Jacinto be added to the list of entities that she represents at the LE&CL TMDL Task Force.

Status: Regional Board Update (Regional Board)

Lauren Briggs, Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board updated the Task Force on the February 14, 2025, Regional Board Adoption Hearing for the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDLs. She informed the Task Force that the Board received both the staff presentation and public comments. However, due to the extensive comments received, and the time required to address the comments, the decision by Regional Board on the updated TMDLs had to be postponed. The Regional Board is planning to reconvene on the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDLs at the Board meeting scheduled for April 25th, in the City of Santa Ana.

Next week staff will be noticing the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDLs for the April 25th meeting. At this meeting, staff will be presenting to the Board on the response to comments received during the comment period. This will be a closed session, and no public comments will be taken.

Update: TMDL Update Activities (Tess Dunham, KSC and Steve Wolosoff, GEI)

Tess Dunham, KSC referring to the email that was sent out to the Task Force following the Regional Board workshop, informing stakeholders that the period to provide public comment on the TMDLs has closed.

Stakeholders were informed that the consultant team, led by Tess, will be available to support Regional Board staff with providing responses to the comment that were received, both oral and written, and on the TMDL update activities.

Update: LEAMS Future Options Study (Steve Wolosoff, GEI)

Presentation: Lake Elsinore Sediment Oxygen Demand Study (John Rudolph GEI)

Steven Wolosoff, GEI introduced John Rudolph to present on the Lake Elsinore Sediment Oxygen Demand and Nutrient Flux Study conducted as a component of the larger LEAMS Future Options Study.

Stakeholders were informed that the purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the potential nutrient reduction that could be achieved with oxygenation, and how much oxygen is required to achieve the targeted in-lake conditions and reductions in nutrients.

Steven informed the Task Force that a final draft of the report will be made available to the Task Force for review by the end of the month (March) and it is expected to be finalized in May 2025.

A copy of the presentation prepared by John Rudolph is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: https://sawpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/SOD-Study_TMDL-TF-Mtg-PPT_030325.pdf

Update: Lake Elsinore Water Quality Plan (Ben Foster, City of Lake Elsinore)

Ben Foster, representing the City of Lake Elsinore, provided an update to the Task Force on the City of Lake Elsinore Water Quality Plan.

Ben reported on the ongoing cyanobacteria (microcystin toxin) monitoring. The latest monthly monitoring results for January 2025, show all monitoring locations as “No Advisory” level, as determined by Regional Board. He noted that for the past three months (since October), the lake has consistently remained at the “No Advisory” level. The City plans to continue with monthly monitoring at least until the hotter weather arrives.

He also presented data that the City has been collecting to show the improvements in water quality. The first graphic showed the current cyanobacteria levels as compared to the same week for the previous 6 years and a graphic of dissolved oxygen (DO) levels before and after the deployment of the Nanobubble barges to show the sharp and steady increase of DO levels in the Lake Elsinore.

Ben also reported on the upcoming Lake Elsinore annual Dream Extreme Fishing Derby (includes bass, catfish and crappie) and Carp Quest (including both bow and rod & reel) events.

The City will continue to provide updates to stakeholders at future Task Force meetings as needed.

Update: Canyon Lake (LESJWA Staff)

Rick Whetsel informed the Task Force that the spring 2025 alum application is being targeted for the week of March 24- 28 depending on upcoming weather conditions.

In support of the Alum program, LESJWA staff will be attending the March 4, 2025 Canyon Lake Property Owners Association Meeting to provide background on the alum program, and a status update on the planned March 26-28, alum application.

Stakeholders were also updated on the process to amend CEQA. The current CEQA document (Amended in 2015) is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2025. LESJWA as the Lead Agency for CEQA is proposing to extend the project in its current form for another 5 years. In that time it is expected that the Task Force will

complete its work to evaluate the effectiveness of the Canyon Lake Alum Project and potential feasibility of implementation of alternative in-lake projects (TMDL Task 4).

Task Force Administration (LESJWA Staff)

Rick Whetsel presented the following items for the Task Force to consider:

- A. Rick Whetsel presented a revised draft FY 2025-26 LE&CL TMDL Task Force Budget distributed to Task Force members on February 24, 2025, for consideration by the Task Force.

Following brief discussion regarding further revisions to the draft budget, it was decided that a final draft FY 2025-26 LE&CL TMDL Task Force Budget be prepared by LESJWA staff and distributed to Task Force members for review and provide a recommendation for approval via email.

Stakeholders requested a worksheet be prepared by LESJWA staff comparing FYE 2026 budget to the previous FYE 2024 and FYE 2025 LE&CL TMDL Task Force Budgets to accompany this draft budget.

- B. Rick Whetsel presented a draft amendment #4 to extend the LE&CL TMDL Task Force Agreement, for consideration by the Task Force.

Amendment #3 to the LE&CL TMDL Task Force Agreement is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2025, but the final approval of the updated LE&CL TMDL Basin Plan Language by the U.S. EPA is not anticipated for at least another year. Amendment #4 was proposed to provide additional time for stakeholders to resolve issues relating to the participation and cost to minor contributing parties named in the TMDLs (Task 9) prior to beginning work to prepare a new Task Force Agreement.

Stakeholders were in general agreement to extending the Task Force Agreement to June 30, 2027 via administrative action; however, it was requested LESJWA staff to remove stipulation II to the Amendment #4. This stipulation was deemed not necessary, and would require the approval of the agencies governing bodies.

Stakeholders requested that a revised Amendment #4 be prepared by LESJWA staff and distributed to Task Force members for review and be brought back for approval at the next LE&CL TMDL Task Force meeting.

- C. Rick Whetsel presented a recommendation of LESJWA staff and the Proposal Review Committee on the selection of GEI Consults to oversee and implement the LE&CL TMDL Compliance Monitoring Program, for consideration by the Task Force.

Stakeholders were informed that LESJWA received only one proposal in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued on January 6, 2025, through Planet Bids requesting proposals from qualified consultants to implement a water quality compliance monitoring program to support the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDLs. LESJWA staff believe this proposal meets the requirements of the RFP and the firm is qualified to perform the work outlined in the RFP based on project understanding and experience working with the proposed staff. LESJWA staff recommends that the Task Force proceed with an Agreement for Services with GEI Consultants.

Following brief discussion it was requested that the due date for the Final Annual TMDL Monitoring Report shown in the Schedule of Deliverables be revised from “within 2 weeks of receipt of all stakeholder comments” to a hard deadline of October 15th. Setting an October 15th deadline would provide time for MS4 to incorporate the findings of this report into their Annual report.

Lynn Merrill, representing the City of San Jacinto, moved a motion; Cynthia Gabaldon, representing the City of Perris seconded the motion.

MOVED, motion for LESJWA staff to authorize LESJWA staff to execute an agreement for services with GEI Consultants to oversee and implement the LE&CL TMDL Compliance Monitoring Program for three years, with an option for a two-year extension. This will include a revision to the Program Schedule of Deliverables due date for the Final Annual TMDL Monitoring Report to be changed to a hard deadline of October 15th.

Other Business

It was announced that Lauren Briggs was promoted to Senior Environmental Scientist, Supervisor and is now Supervisor of the Santa Ana Regional Board's Inland Planning Section.

Schedule Next Meeting

The next LE/CL TMDL Task Force meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Table Summary of Agreements and Actions

Date of Action/Agreement	Action/Agreement	Responsible Entities Reaching Agreement
September 28, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve funding in the amount of up to \$30,000 to CDM Smith to assist Task Force technical issues, including but not limited to, initial discussions regarding content and scope of TMDL Implementation Plan revisions should the Task Force decide to provide resources for further revising the 2018 draft TMDL. 	Voting Task Force members.
November 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve moving forward with the proposed step-wise approach to updating the TMDL Technical Report and its timeline. 	Voting Task Force members
January 10, 2022	-	-
March 2, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Task Force agreed to submit a comment letter to the Draft Staff Working Proposal for MS4 Permit by March 18, 2022. Regional Board confirmed that they would accept the comments past their soft deadline of March 10. Approved the alum application to the Canyon Lake if the February monitoring data exceeds 0.09. 	Voting Task Force members
April 20, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved execution of the Key Principles for Technical TMDL Revision by Mark, Norton Task Force Administrator on behalf of the voting members of the task force subject to revisions discussed at the 4/20/2022 task force meeting. Approved submittal of the Task Force Comment letter to Regional Board on the Staff Working Proposal for the MS4 Permit upon revision discussed at the 4/20/2022 task force meeting. Regional Board abstained from action and conversation of this matter. Approved amendment #3 to extend the LE/CL TMDL Task Force Agreement for a period of three years to June 30, 2025, with the option that the Agreement, while still in full force and effect, may be extended an additional two years, to June 30, 2027, by means of Administrative Action by the Task Force Administrator 	Voting Task Force members; Excludes Regional Board in relation to the Comment Letter to Regional Board on the Staff Working Proposal for the MS4 Permit.
June 27, 2022	-	-
August 17, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved execution of the Key Principles for Technical TMDL Revision by Mark Norton, Task Force Administrator on behalf of the voting members of the LE&CL TMDL Task Force. Approved a proposal by CDM Smith and a recommendation to the LESJWA Board to authorize a Task Order to update and revise the technical document and additional TMDL technical support services. 	Mark Norton, Task Force Administrator on behalf of the voting members of the LE&CL TMDL Task Force
September 27, 2022	-	-
November 14, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer the remaining balance of the contract work supported by Steven Wolosoff as of December 31, 2022 from CDM Smith and enter into an agreement with GEI Consultants to complete work starting on January 1 2023. Exercise an option for a two year extension with WSP USA to oversee and implement TMDL Compliance Monitoring. Program. 	Voting Task Force members
January 10, 2023	-	-
February 15, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Task Force moved to provide LESJWA staff in coordination with the Task Force consulting team the authority to make a determination on the need for a Spring 2023 alum application based upon review of the February 2023 Canyon Lake monitoring results to be provided by WSP USA. 	Voting Task Force members.
March 28, 2023	-	-
April 25, 2023	-	-
June 5, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force approved LESJWA staff to rework the nutrient offset credits based solely on the need for total phosphorus offset credits and to invoice stakeholders for only 2022 TP offset credits. All 	Voting Task Force members.

	remaining funds are to be applied to stakeholders 2023 LEAMS budget allocation.	
August 7, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force approved for LESJWA staff to prepare a Change Order for WSPUSA for an amount not to exceed \$10,330 to perform two additional Lake Elsinore in-lake monitoring events, one each in November and December 2023 using funds available from the LE&CL TMDL Task Force reserve. 	Voting Task Force members.
August 27 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force approved LESJWA staff to extend Agreement for Services with Tess Dunham, Kahn, Soares & Conway to serve as Regulatory Compliance Expert for the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDL Task Force for two additional years for FYEs 2026 and 2027. Task Force approved LESJWA staff to extend Agreement with Aquatechnex in one-year increments. At this time LESJWA staff will extend the agreement for CT 2025 to provide for two semi-annual Canyon Lake alum dosings to support the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDL Task force. 	Voting Task Force members.