

## MEETING NOTES

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# Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDL Task Force

May 19, 2025

### **PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:**

*Participant list not available. Zoom did not capture the attendance report for this meeting.*

### **Call to Order & Introductions**

The Lake Elsinore/Canyon Lake TMDL Task (Task Force) meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. by Rick Whetsel, with participants participating remotely.

### **Approval of Meeting Notes from April 22, 2025 Task Force Meeting**

The April 22, 2025 meeting notes were approved as posted.

### **Status: Regional Board Update (Regional Board)**

Lauren Briggs, Regional Board, announced that the draft technical report and Basin Plan Amendment have been released for a limited 45-day public comment period, which began last Friday and will remain open until June 30 at noon. All related documents, including an errata with redlined revisions, are available on the Regional Board's website. The Board is still scheduled to hold a hearing on July 25<sup>th</sup>, which will take place in the City of Orange.

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

Tess Dunham, KSC, provided a brief update on TMDL-related activities. She clarified that the errata sheet referenced earlier includes the removal of the City of Banning as a responsible party in the Basin Plan Amendment, with corresponding revisions made to the technical TMDL report. Since the current public comment period is limited to specific revisions, Dunham noted that a simple draft comment letter will be prepared and shared soon, likely stating the Task Force supports the removal of Banning at this time. She also mentioned that this may help address prior concerns raised from a broader regional perspective. Additionally, Tess gave a brief update on the Minor Source Study, noting that a kickoff call with interested stakeholders is planned for later in the week, with a follow-up report to be provided at the next Task Force meeting.

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

Steve Wolosoff, GEI, provided a brief update on the LEAMS Future Options Study. He noted that the study was submitted prior to the last meeting and has been in a comment review period since then. While only a few comments have been received so far, the Regional Board requested an additional two weeks to provide feedback, extending the timeline to the end of the month. The goal is to finalize the study shortly thereafter and move directly into the next phase, which includes design, procurement, and eventual implementation.

### **Update: Lake Elsinore Water Quality Plan (Adam Gufarotti, City of Lake Elsinore)**

Adam Gufarotti, City of Lake Elsinore, reported that the latest water quality sampling, conducted on May 7, showed good results, with all five monitoring sites under no advisory status. He noted that since October of the previous year, the lake has consistently remained advisory-free. As temperatures rise, the City remains cautiously optimistic that the lake's condition, supported by the nanobubble system, will continue to hold.

Ben Foster, City of Lake Elsinore, added that the first carp removal event in some time took place the day before, coinciding with a carp quest tournament. A total of 619 pounds of carp, or 137 fish, were removed, mostly by bowfishing teams. Although the weather impacted visibility and likely affected totals, the event drew strong interest, particularly from the bowfishing community. He also mentioned sightings of mirror carp and koi, which have sparked additional attention. Rick Whetsel noted that recent fish surveys suggest the carp population may not be as large as in the past, though Foster clarified that regular fishers are still seeing plenty in the lake. The city plans to continue these efforts in the future.

**Update: Canyon Lake (LESJWA Staff)**

**A. Discussion: Proposal Analysis of Canyon Lake Water Quality in Support of Future Alum Applications**

Steve Wolosoff from GEI led a comprehensive presentation reviewing the history, current practices, challenges, and future considerations of the alum treatment program. Alum has been used since 2013 as a phosphorus-binding agent to improve water quality and reduce algal blooms. It was originally selected over hypolimnetic oxygenation due to its broader effectiveness and cost efficiency, with annual applications in spring and fall targeting both external and internal phosphorus loads.

The program has shown success in significantly reducing phosphorus and improving chlorophyll-a levels. Alum applications are highly cost-effective compared to stormwater best management practices, with phosphorus removal costs estimated at \$77 per pound, significantly lower than traditional methods. Toxicity testing conducted in 2013 indicated no harmful effects at application levels used, but recent fish kills have raised new questions. A fish kill in April 2024 may have been linked to temporary spikes in aluminum concentration immediately after application. However, a more recent and severe fish die-off in April 2025, involving mostly adult bass in the lake's eastern arm, was found to correlate strongly with a golden algae bloom, not alum exposure.

The Task Force discussed various operational and scientific improvements to mitigate such issues. These include increasing the frequency and timing of post-application monitoring, especially within 48–72 hours of treatment, redoing the original toxicity and jar testing, evaluating alternative materials or delivery methods (e.g., subsurface or wet weather applications), and adjusting alum dosages to improve effectiveness and reduce nuisance conditions. There was strong support for GEI to develop a phased proposal addressing immediate operational enhancements and setting the groundwork for Task 4 of the TMDL Phase 2 implementation, which focuses on long-term in-lake treatment alternatives. The Task Force authorized GEI to prepare a scope of work for review at the next meeting, with the goal of maintaining water quality improvements, minimizing environmental impacts, and enhancing communication with stakeholders.

A motion was put forward by Lynn Merrill representing the City of San Jacinto and Second by Cynthia Gabaldon representing the Cities of Menifee, Perris, San Jacinto, and March JPA to approve.

**MOVED**, to authorize GEI to develop a proposal to address immediate operational concerns and lay the groundwork for Task 4 of the TMDL Phase 2 implementation.

A copy of the presentation prepared by Steven Wolosoff is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: <https://sawpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/LECL-Task-Force-Presentation-May-2025.pdf>

**Task Force Administration (LESJWA Staff)**

Rick Whetsel reported that there were no new updates at this time. He noted that the team is focused on closing out Fiscal Year 2024–25 over the next month, and everything is currently on track and within budget. He expressed confidence that the fiscal year will close out successfully and that the Task Force is well-positioned to move smoothly into the next fiscal year. No questions were raised by attendees.

**Other Business**

No other business to discuss.

**Schedule Next Meeting**

The next LE/CL TMDL Task Force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, 2025, at 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

**Table Summary of Agreements and Actions**

<b>Date of Action/Agreement</b>	<b>Action/Agreement</b>	<b>Responsible Entities Reaching Agreement</b>
September 28, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members.
November 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve moving forward with the proposed step-wise approach to updating the TMDL Technical Report and its timeline.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members
January 10, 2022	-	-
March 2, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Approved the alum application to the Canyon Lake if the February monitoring data exceeds 0.09.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members
April 20, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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</li> </ul>	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"> <li>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&amp;CL TMDL Task Force.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>Exercise an option for a two year extension with WSP USA to oversee and implement TMDL Compliance Monitoring. Program.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members
January 10, 2023	-	-
February 15, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members.
March 28, 2023	-	-
April 25, 2023	-	-
June 5, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>	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"> <li>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&amp;CL TMDL Task Force reserve.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members.
August 27 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task Force approved LESJWA staff to extend Agreement for Services with Tess Dunham, Kahn, Soares &amp; 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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>	Voting Task Force members.