

Grazing Land and Water Quality Impacts

An Update on Central Coast Water Board Assessment Activities

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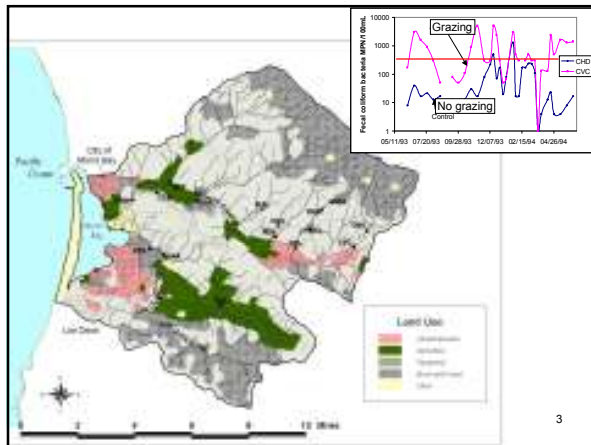
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Why Assess?

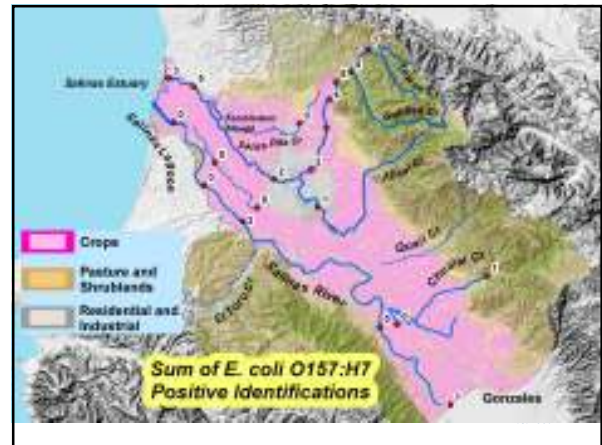
- Bacteria levels elevated
- State Nonpoint Source Policy
- Established Water Quality Improvement Plans - TMDLs
- Opportunity for riparian habitat and water quality enhancement

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State Nonpoint Source Policy

- Control NPS pollution discharges
- Regulate discharges
- Use permitting authorities pursuant to Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

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State Nonpoint Source Policy- Permitting Authorities

- Basin Plan Prohibitions
- Waste Discharge Requirements
- Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements

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State Nonpoint Source Policy- Existing Regulations

- Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements
 - Irrigated agricultural lands
- Prohibitions on discharges from facilities that do not have management plans-
 - Part of Water Quality Improvement Plans to achieve TMDLs
 - Apply to grazing, livestock, roads, etc.

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State Nonpoint Source Policy- Permitting Authorities

Similarities

- Compliance with specific conditions
- Water quality management measures
- Reporting on implementation
- Monitoring- individual or cooperative

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State Nonpoint Source Policy- Permitting Authorities

Differences

- Approval process
 - Prohibition longer; does not need renewal
 - WDRs or Waivers shorter
 - WDRs need 5-, 10- or 15-year renewal
 - Waivers need 5-year renewal
- Fees
 - Prohibitions- none
 - WDRs- set fee schedule
 - Waivers- set fee schedule, lower than for WDRs

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Water Quality Improvement Plans- TMDLs

- Approved Plans with grazing and livestock as a source
 - Sediment and Nitrate in San Lorenzo River
 - Sediment and Bacteria in Morro Bay
 - Sediment in Pajaro River
 - Bacteria in Watsonville Slough

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Water Quality Improvement Plans- TMDLs

- Proposed Plans with grazing and livestock as sources
 - Bacteria in Santa Cruz County Watersheds, including San Lorenzo River
 - Bacteria in Salinas River Watershed
 - Bacteria in Pajaro River Watershed
 - Bacteria in Santa Maria River Watershed

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OPPORTUNITY

RIPARIAN
HABITAT

and

WATER QUALITY

Improvement
and
Protection

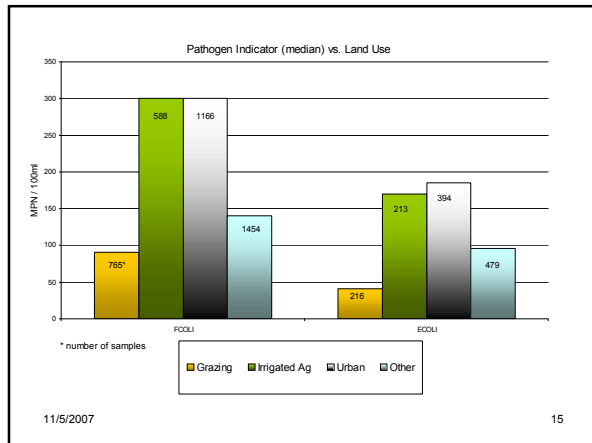
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What to assess?

- Evaluating need for region-wide regulations for grazing and livestock operations by:
 - Analyzing water quality data and watershed activities
 - Initiating dialogue with stakeholders
 - Reviewing other regulatory approaches
 - Integration and coordination with existing regulations

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State Nonpoint Source Policy-Permitting Authorities

Untested Options

- Industry/Facility Type permit based on industry or third-party program
- Individual permits covering all ranch/farm operations
- Watershed-based permits covering one or more types of facilities

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We would like to know:

- How and when to communicate with landowners and agencies
 - Advisory Committee?
 - Email?
 - Website?
- What information we should use to understand locations and effectiveness of proper management practices
- Your ideas and preferences to protect habitat and water quality

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Our Next Steps and Timeline:

- Oct-Dec:
 - Meet with Cattleman's Associations in Central Coast Counties
 - Establish stakeholder forum with selected representatives and Conduct Data and Information Analyses
 - Learn about regulatory options in other regions, states
- Sept-March 2008:
 - Review information from all of the above
 - Decide if region-wide regulations needed

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Remember:

- Takes time to determine sources of pollution
- Evaluate your own contributions to water quality problems and use proper management practices
- Work with others
- Engage with regulators early and often because you can influence the Water Board's decisions

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Resources

- Management practices and links to:
 - Rangeland Water Quality Management Plan
 - Information on the Bureau of Land Management's standards for rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing on public lands
 - Information on the California Grazing Academy
<http://www.swrch.ca.gov/nps/nps-encyclopedia/agriculture.pdf>
- General information about Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Programs at
<http://www.swrch.ca.gov/nps/index.html#programs>
- Central Coast Water Board
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/>

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