



REGION 10

SEATTLE, WA 98101

September 12, 2024

Mr. Steve Mrazik
 Manager, Watershed Management
 Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
 700 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 600
 Portland, Oregon 97232-4100

Dear Mr. Mrazik:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has completed its Clean Water Act review of the Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin Total Maximum Daily Load for Temperature, submitted by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality on August 7, 2024. The Lower Columbia-Sandy TMDLs address temperature impairments in the Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin. The waterbody segments (assessment units) addressed by this TMDL project totals twenty-seven unique waterbody segments, each of which is identified as impaired on ODEQ’s 2022 303(d) list for one or more fish and aquatic life uses as identified in the table below.

Assessment Unit Name	Assessment Unit	Use Period	
Beaver Creek	OR_SR_1708000107_02_103612	Year round	Spawning
Benson Lake	OR_LK_1708000108_15_100639	Year round	NA
Bull Run River	OR_SR_1708000105_11_103611	Year round	Spawning
Cedar Creek	OR_SR_1708000104_02_103607	Year round	NA
Clear Creek	OR_SR_1708000101_02_103597	Year round	Spawning
Clear Fork	OR_SR_1708000101_02_103596	NA	Spawning
Gordon Creek	OR_SR_1708000107_02_103615	NA	Spawning
Gordon Creek	OR_SR_1708000107_02_103617	NA	Spawning
HUC12 Name: Beaver Creek-Sandy River	OR_WS_170800010703_02_103703	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Bridal Veil Creek-Columbia River	OR_WS_170800010803_15_103654	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Cedar Creek-Sandy River	OR_WS_170800010402_02_103644	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Headwaters Sandy River	OR_WS_170800010101_02_103635	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Little Sandy River	OR_WS_170800010505_11_103669	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Lower Bull Run River	OR_WS_170800010506_11_103650	Year round	NA
HUC12 Name: Lower Salmon River	OR_WS_170800010304_02_103642	Year round	NA

Assessment Unit Name	Assessment Unit	Use Period	
HUC12 Name: Tanner Creek-Columbia River	OR_WS_170800010801_15_103707	Year round	Spawning
HUC12 Name: Wildcat Creek-Sandy River	OR_WS_170800010401_02_103643	NA	Spawning
Little Sandy River	OR_SR_1708000105_11_103609	Year round	Spawning
Lost Creek	OR_SR_1708000101_02_103598	NA	Spawning
Salmon River	OR_SR_1708000103_02_103606	Year round	NA
Sandy River	OR_SR_1708000101_02_103595	Year round	NA
Sandy River	OR_SR_1708000101_02_103599	Year round	Spawning
Sandy River	OR_SR_1708000104_02_103608	Year round	Spawning
Sandy River	OR_SR_1708000107_02_103616	Year round	NA
South Fork Salmon River	OR_SR_1708000103_02_103604	NA	Spawning
Still Creek	OR_SR_1708000102_02_103601	NA	Spawning
Zigzag River	OR_SR_1708000102_02_103600	NA	Spawning

The EPA is approving the TMDLs that address thirty-six impairments on these twenty-seven assessment units. The TMDL project meets the statutory and regulatory requirements found in section 303(d) of the CWA and the EPA's implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R Part 130. The EPA's review indicates that the allocations have been established at levels that, when fully implemented, will lead to attainment of applicable water quality standards. As such, ODEQ does not need to include these waters on the next 303(d) list of impaired waters for temperature.

The Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin TMDL document is a watershed-based TMDL project that also addresses sources of thermal loading to thirty unimpaired and/or unassessed waterbodies within the subbasins comprising the Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin TMDL project area. Wasteload allocations, loading capacity, and load allocation calculations are included for all unimpaired and unassessed waterbodies. It is not an automatic process to move assessment units into category 4a, if future impairments are identified, therefore the EPA expects Oregon to provide supplemental information for any future assessment units identified as impaired that Oregon wishes to cover under this TMDL project.

ODEQ's submittal also includes a protection plan for the unimpaired waters, and a Water Quality Management Plan, which is an implementation plan for the TMDL project. As you know, the EPA has no duty to approve or disapprove protection plans or implementation plans under section 303(d) of the CWA; therefore, the EPA is taking no action on the WQMP or protection plan. Implementation is the critical next step to improve water quality, and the EPA encourages ODEQ to continue its work with responsible parties to implement the WQMP.

The EPA appreciates the work of Ryan Mitchie, David Fairbairn, Yuan Grund, and Michele Martin in developing and completing the Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin TMDL project for Temperature. The EPA also appreciates the continued cooperation by ODEQ as we work towards the common goal of addressing impaired waters in the State of Oregon. By the EPA's approval action, the temperature TMDLs in the Lower Columbia-Sandy Subbasin are now incorporated into the State's WQMP under section 303(e) of the CWA.

If you have any comments or questions on this agency action, please feel free to call me at (206) 553-0171 or have your staff contact Rebecca Veiga Nascimento at (208) 378-5767 or by email at Veiganascimento.rebecca@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Hanh Shaw
Manager, Standards, Assessment and Watershed
Management Branch
Water Division

cc: Ryan Michie, ODEQ mailto:(ryan.michie@deq.oregon.gov)
Michele Martin, ODEQ (michele.martin@deq.oregon.gov)