



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 REGION 10
 1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
 Seattle, WA 98101-3140

JAN 24 2018

OFFICE OF
 WATER AND WATERSHEDS

Mr. Barry Burnell, Administrator
 Water Quality Division
 Department of Environmental Quality
 1410 North Hilton
 Boise, Idaho 83706-1255

Re: Approval of the Salt River Subbasin Bacteria TMDLs (HUC: 17040105)

Dear Mr. Burnell:

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) submitted the Salt River Subbasin *E. coli* bacteria and sediment Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on August 24, 2015, and updated TMDLs that revised the sediment wasteload allocations on August 2, 2017. The EPA will be making a decision on the sediment TMDLs through a separate action. Following our review, the EPA is pleased to approve five *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) TMDLs. Four of these waters were included in Idaho's 2014 303(d) list (List) of impaired waters, as identified in Table 1.

Table 1: EPA-Approved *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) TMDLs on Impaired Waters

Water Body Name	Assessment Unit Number
Bear Canyon	ID17040105SK003_02e
Smoky Creek	ID17040105SK007_02c
Crow Creek	ID17040105SK008_04
Draney Creek	ID17040105SK007_02f

IDEQ completed an *E. coli* TMDL for Lower Stump Creek, ID17040105SK006_04 which was not meeting water quality standards for *E. coli*, but had not previously been included on Idaho's Category 5 List of impaired waters (List) needing a TMDL for *E. coli*. The EPA understands that Lower Stump Creek, ID17040105SK006_04 would have been included on the List for the *E. coli* impairment had the State been aware of the impairment at the time the List was completed.

Our review indicates that these allocations have been established at a level that, when fully implemented, will lead to the attainment of the water quality standards addressed by these TMDLs. Therefore, the IDEQ does not need to include these waters on the next 303(d) list of impaired waters for the pollutant(s) covered by these TMDLs.

This approval only includes those waters for which a TMDL was completed and does not constitute approval for the proposed de-listing of waters within Hydrologic Unit Code 17040105 from the Idaho §303(d) list. Any proposed de-listing of waters will be considered at the time of submission of the next §303(d) list of impaired waters.

IDEQ's submittal also included implementation strategies for the TMDLs that were developed and submitted pursuant to the TMDL Settlement Agreement of July 2002. The EPA has no duty to approve or disapprove implementation strategies under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA); therefore, the EPA is not

taking action on these strategies. Implementation is the critical next step to realize improvements in water quality, and we encourage IDEQ to continue their work with responsible parties on implementation of these strategies.

We would like to recognize Hannah Harris for her dedication in developing these TMDLs and bringing them to completion.

By the EPA's approval, these TMDLs are now incorporated into the State's Water Quality Management Plan under §303(e) of the CWA. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to call me at (206) 553-1855, or you may call Jayne Carlin of my staff at (206) 553-8512.

Sincerely,



Daniel D. Opalski, Director
Office of Water and Watersheds

cc: Mr. Doug Conde, Attorney General, Idaho
Mr. Don Essig, Surface Water Program Manager, IDEQ
Mr. Graham Freeman, TMDL Program Coordinator, IDEQ
Mr. Lynn Van Every, Water Quality Manager, Pocatello Regional Office, IDEQ
Ms. Hannah Harris, Pocatello Regional Office, IDEQ
Mr. Laird Lucas, Advocates for the West
Ms. Kristen Boyles, Earthjustice