

MEDIA ALERT

SAVE THE AMERICAN RIVER ASSOCIATION

June 12, 2021

WATER AT TISCORNIA BEACH IN DISCOVERY PARK IS CONTAMINATED AND UNSAFE FOR SWIMMING

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Water tests have been conducted every Saturday at Tiscornia Beach at the mouth of the American River since July 2020 by three retired university professors. Once out of the rainy season, the tests have consistently found *E.coli* bacteria levels that exceed U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards for safe swimming.

***“E.coli* represents risk of disease because it comes from feces which can carry any number of diseases from infected people, including *Shigella* dysentery and *Salmonella*,” said Robert Metcalf, professor emeritus, Biological Sciences, Sacramento State University. “EPA recommendations for swimming water set 320/100 milliliters (3.2 per one ml—about 1/5 teaspoon) as the maximum acceptable level of contamination. Our tests show that that level is regularly exceeded at Tiscornia Beach. Testing done by the state Regional Water Quality Board confirms our findings.”**

“Hundreds of children use this beach and they are most vulnerable to swallowing contaminated water,” said Mary Beth Metcalf, MD, retired Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, UC Davis. “The elevated levels of pollution at Tiscornia Beach greatly increase the risk of disease.”

Alan Wade, professor emeritus, Social Work, Sacramento State University, noted that if tests found *E.coli* pollution at a coastal beach

at the elevated levels detected at Tiscornia Beach, the beach would have been shut down months ago.

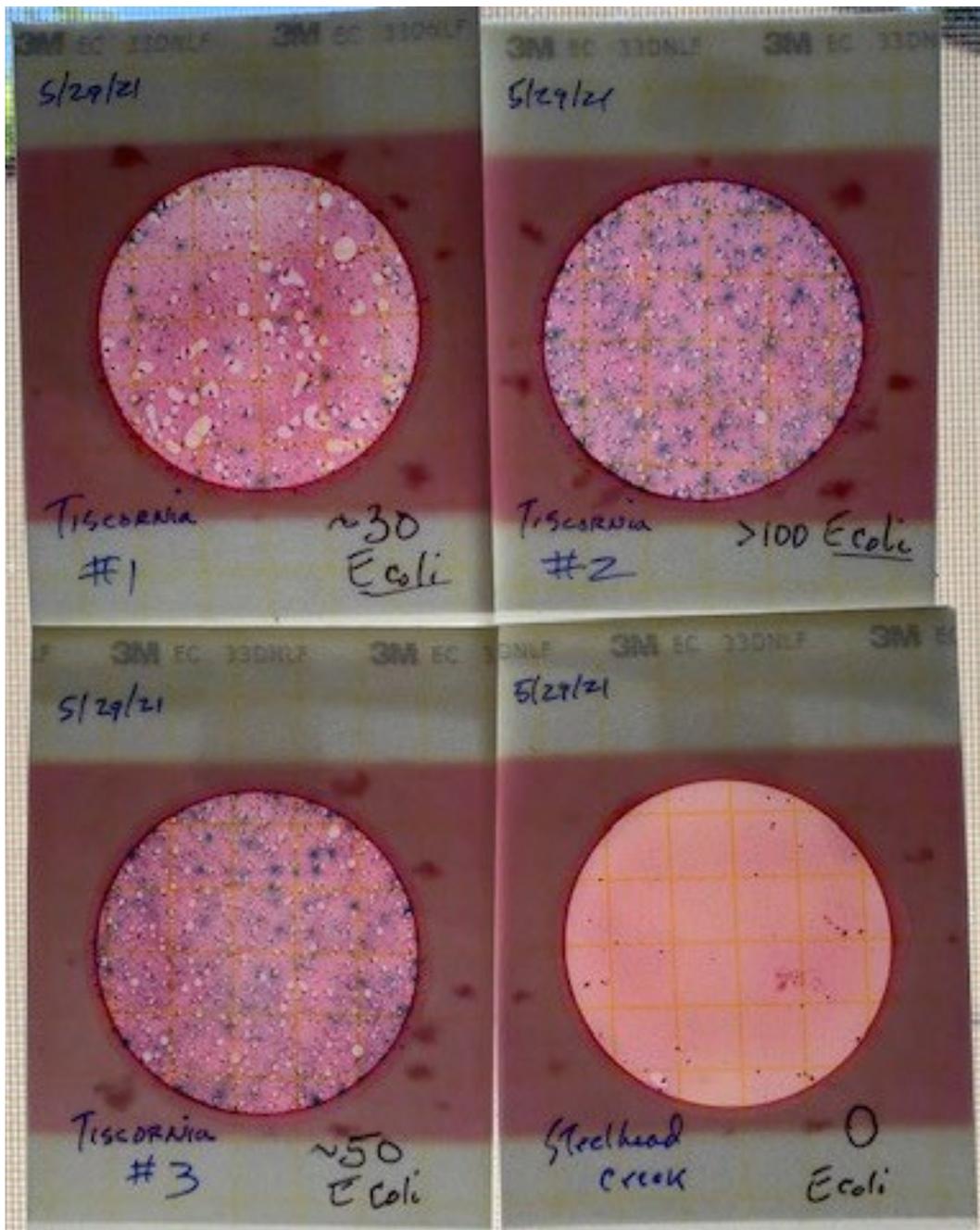
“Save the American River Association has been urging local officials to close Tiscornia Beach or at least post easily seen and read signs on the beach warning beach users,” Wade said. “But those requests have been ignored.”

The sign that has been posted at Tiscornia warns people not to drink the river water. But the sign is faded and the print is small.

“The sign is easy to overlook when entering the area,” Wade said, “and it totally misses the mark of conveying accurate information.”

The professors have been sharing the results of their weekly water test with Sacramento County and the state Regional Water Quality Control Board. The state board plans to do further studies to help identify the source of the fecal pollution of Tiscornia Beach.

Petri film photo on the next page.



These Petri films were inoculated with water from Tiscornia Beach collected on May 29, 2021. Each blue dot represents one E. coli -- bacteria that indicates recent fecal pollution is present. Water samples from Tiscornia Beach usually have E. coli that exceeds the EPA standard for safe water. On this day, the beach was exceedingly polluted.