

IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM UPDATE
CENTRAL VALLEY WATER BOARD
December 2011

This month's Irrigated Agricultural Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) monthly report will provide an update on activities of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) ILRP, as reported in the Central Valley Water Board's December 1-2, 2011 Executive Officer's report. Current and past ILRP program monthly reports can be found on the [State Water Board Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program](#) website.

General

Long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program:

On 29 September 2011, Regional Board staff participated in a tour of a Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition member's farm and participated in presentations from sub-watershed representatives on local groundwater efforts. Staff also attended the SVWQC quarterly meeting in Oroville where staff gave a presentation on groundwater quality issues and the long-term program.

On 30 September 2011, Regional Board staff conducted a Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup meeting. At this meeting, workgroup members and the general public provided comments on draft groundwater monitoring data needs for the irrigated lands program. The draft groundwater monitoring data needs were developed by the Groundwater Monitoring Advisory Workgroup. Stakeholder comments will be considered by regional board staff in the development of groundwater monitoring programs for irrigated lands program WDRs.

On 24 October 2011, Regional Board staff met with members of the dairy industry in Modesto to discuss options for regulating irrigated lands owned by dairy operators in a manner consistent with the irrigated lands regulatory program.

On 25 October 2011, the Executive Officer sent a memo to the State Water Board requesting approval of the recently adopted Basin Plan amendments to provide estimated cost and sources of financing for the irrigated lands program. These amendments were adopted by the Central Valley Water Board at the 13 October 2011 meeting. The State Water Board will consider approval of these amendments at their regularly scheduled 10 January 2012 meeting.

On 26 October 2011, Regional Board staff met with the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to discuss coordination of pesticide monitoring. Topics of discussion included coordination of groundwater monitoring, developing prioritization lists for pesticide monitoring, and working to ensure that pesticide monitoring data

collected for the irrigated lands program can be reviewed by DPR.

East-side San Joaquin River Watershed WDR

Regional Board staff is currently developing draft WDRs. A working draft of the surface water monitoring requirements has been developed and staff is working on revising the draft monitoring requirements based on initial comments.

Sacramento River Watershed Rice WDR

On 22 September Regional Board staff met with the Rice Commission to discuss a groundwater prioritization strategy and straw proposals for gathering grower information. On 11 October 2011, Regional Board staff took a tour of a rice farm sponsored by the rice commission and discussed potential nitrate issues associated with rice with a UC Davis rice researcher. Staff has developed internal draft WDRs for Sacramento Valley Rice Operations. These WDRs are currently being reviewed internally.

Tulare Lake Basin WDR

On 20 October 2011, Regional Board staff met with the Southern San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition to discuss development of Waste Discharge Requirements under the long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Topics of the discussion included groundwater vulnerability within the Coalition boundaries, development of groundwater Management Plans, and identification of potential wells to be used for groundwater quality monitoring.

Westlands WDR

On 27 September 2011, Regional Board staff met with the Westlands Coalition to discuss development of Waste Discharge Requirements under the long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Topics of the discussion included Coalition boundary issues, proposed high groundwater vulnerability areas, and overall process and schedule.

Individual General WDR

Originally, Regional Board staff intended to bring the draft general WDRs applicable to individuals before the Central Valley Water Board prior to any of the third-party WDRs. This plan has been modified so that the initial set of two to three third-party WDRs will be completed prior to Board consideration of the general WDRs for individuals.

Outreach

Postcards:

In October 2011 ILRP staff mailed 59 postcards to non-participating landowners in Placer and Nevada Counties. ILRP staff screened these landowners' parcels using aerial photography to target agricultural operations with the potential to discharge waste to surface waters.

Also, in October 2011, ILRP staff mailed an additional five postcards to landowners in Stanislaus County. These postcards were mailed to the new landowners of parcels that were dropped from the regional coalition because the original owner sold the property.

Exemption Claim Inspections:

In September and October 2011, Regional Board staff completed seven inspections to verify landowner exemption claims to the ILRP. Landowners can respond to ILRP staff's postcards or 13267 Orders by claiming their land is not used for agriculture, not irrigated, or that it has no irrigation tail water or storm water runoff (no waste discharges to surface waters). These claims create a need for verification inspections. Staff verified that the lands associated with these inspections were exempt from regulatory coverage under the ILRP.

Approval to Join a Coalition:

In October 2011, the Executive Officer approved 35 irrigated lands owners or operators to join a coalition group. Nine of these applications are the result of ILRP postcard mailings, and three of the applications are the result of CWC §13267 Orders. These approvals add about 8,200 acres to the program.

Coalition Groups

California Rice Commission (CRC):

On 26 October 2011, a stakeholders meeting for the Rice Pesticides Program was held at the Regional Board office. There were no exceedances of the performance goals for the 2011 season. Stakeholders agreed the 2011 implemented management practices were effective and should continue through the 2012 season.

East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition:

The East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition are working jointly to meet the requirements of the San Joaquin River chlorpyrifos and diazinon Total Maximum Daily Load. On 7 October 2011, the coalitions provided a flow chart that describes actions the coalitions will take to address further exceedances. The flow chart and proposed process for responding to additional exceedances is under review.

On 17 October 2011, the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition submitted Performance Goals for Black Rascal Creek, Deadman Creek, Deadman Creek, and Hilmar Drain as part of its approved Management Plan implementation schedule. The Performance Goals are under staff review.

Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC):

On 14 September 2011, a letter from the Executive Officer was sent to the Coalition in

response to the Coalition's proposed 2011 Management Plan monitoring schedule. This proposed schedule was submitted in February 2011 and was the subject of discussions between the Coalition and Regional Board staff for several months afterwards. This letter outlined the issues involved and the actions to be taken by the coalition and by Regional Board staff to ensure that future Management Plan monitoring is consistent with ILRP program requirements.

Regional Board staff and coalition representatives held the quarterly Management Plan meeting on 20 September 2011. The meeting focused on the 2012 monitoring plan and Management Plan monitoring obligations, as well as a review of toxicity exceedances in 2011 and source evaluations for various Management Plan elements.

A letter was sent from the ILRP staff to the SVWQC on 30 September 2011 acknowledging and accepting the coalition's Annual Management Plan Progress Report.

On 6 October 2011, a letter was sent from the Executive Officer to the SVWQC reviewing the chlorpyrifos and diazinon TMDL annual report submitted January 12, 2011. This letter noted that in the next several months, Regional Board staff will begin working with the coalition to develop a new Order for General Waste Discharge Requirement with a plan that will ensure the necessary data are collected to determine compliance with the TMDLs.

San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition:

On 24 October 2011, the San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition submitted Performance Goals for Kellogg Creek, Mormon Slough at Jacktone Road, and Sand Creek at Highway 4 Bypass as part of its approved Management Plan implementation schedule. The Performance Goals are under review.

Southern San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition (SSJWQC):

On 20 October 2011, Regional Board staff met with the Tule Sub-watershed to discuss required Management Plans and recent widespread toxicity to Fathead minnow. Regional Board staff clarified the requirements of the MRP Order regarding submittal of Management Plans and Exceedance Reports and requested the required documents be submitted.

Westlands Coalition:

On 27 September 2011, Regional Board staff met with the Westlands Coalition to discuss current Coalition issues including the submittal of required Management Plans and new formatting tools for Electronic Data Deliverable submittals. During the meeting Regional Board staff requested the Westlands Coalition submit a schedule for Management Plan development and implementation. On 14 October 2011, a letter was issued to the Westlands Coalition formally explaining the data formatting tools.

On 14 October 2011, the Westlands Coalition submitted a schedule for Management Plan development and implementation. Regional Board staff is

currently reviewing the schedule.

Westside Coalition:

On 30 September 2011, the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition submitted its Focused Plan III Management Plan for Poso Slough and Salt Slough. The Focused Plan addresses exceedances in these subwatersheds by identifying irrigated agriculture source, identifying management practices to implement and a schedule. The Focused Plan is under review.

Other Projects Data Management

Data reports received through 1 September 2011 that arrived in an electronic SWAMP comparable format are currently being prepared for loading into a California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) comparable database provided by the Central Valley Regional Data Center (CV RDC). These reports and future data sets will be sent to the CV RDC to be uploaded into CEDEN for state-wide assessment efforts. At this time, 38 reports have been successfully processed and loaded into the CEDEN comparable database. The next round of reports is due in December 2011.

In a joint effort, the CV RDC and ILRP staffs are in the process of performing the final reviews of previously loaded data sets to begin the transfer of those sets to CEDEN. It is estimated that 28 of the reports will be ready and transferred before the year's end.

Concurrent to processing and loading of submitted electronic data, data submission feedback packages have been developed to assist the coalitions with formatting and reviewing data prior to submission to meet the electronic data submittal requirements of the program. The feedback packages contain guidance documents, electronic versions of quality assurance project plans, review checklists and code look up lists. The Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition received a feedback package on 8 August 2011 for their 1 June 2011 quarterly data submittal. The Westside San Joaquin Water Coalition received their feedback package on 19 August 2011 for their 30 June 2011 semi-annual monitoring report. The California Rice Commission received their feedback package for the 2009 and 2010 annual monitoring reports on 9 September 2011. The Westlands Stormwater Coalition received their feedback package for their 1 March 2011 quarterly data report in September 2011.

Prop 84 Grant Funding

The first-round of successful applicants is being processed. Some of the projects may start before the end of the year with the remaining expected to start after the rainy season. The second-round of applicants should take place early in 2012.