

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
FEBRUARY 3, 2009**

ITEM 5

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION ALLOCATING \$1,765,000 FROM THE CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ACCOUNT TO THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD AND CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD FOR SUPPORT OF WATER QUALITY PLANNING EFFORTS RELATED TO SALINITY IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY/SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA ESTUARY AND THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER BASIN

DISCUSSION

The State Water Board and Central Valley Water Board jointly request funding of \$1,765,000 to support a comprehensive effort to address salinity problems in the Bay-Delta and Central Valley region. This effort will include review and potential updates to provisions of the Bay-Delta Plan concerning southern Delta salinity, and the Central Valley Plan concerning San Joaquin River salinity.

A comprehensive salinity control program for the San Joaquin River and southern Delta is needed to abate the effects of high salt concentrations in surface water and groundwater. The review, development, and implementation of salinity standards for the San Joaquin River upstream of the Delta and in the southern Delta can help to reduce salt concentrations in the river and Delta, and may help conserve fresh water supplies in the State. Cleanup and abatement of the effects of basinwide groundwater contamination is required to protect agricultural, and municipal and industrial beneficial uses.

The State Water Board and Central Valley Water Board will use these funds for contract support services to implement components of the Water Boards' Strategic Workplan for Activities in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay Delta Strategic Workplan). The State Water Board will use \$1,000,000 of these funds to develop California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation needed to support adoption and implementation of any necessary revisions to southern Delta salinity objectives. The Central Valley Water Board will use \$765,000 of these funds to develop salinity objectives and a TMDL for salinity on the San Joaquin River upstream of Vernalis from the confluence with the Merced River to the Stanislaus River. Contract assistance will be provided in four areas: 1) watershed-specific soil salinity modeling and evaluation of crop salinity tolerance (\$40,000, Central Valley Water Board); 2) flow/water quality modeling (\$350,000, Central Valley Water Board); 3) CEQA compliance (\$300,000, Central Valley Water Board; and \$1,000,000, State Water Board); and 4) economic analysis (\$75,000, Central Valley Water Board).

The State Water Board/Central Valley Water Board staff anticipates that the requested funds will support water quality control planning for a period of 37 to 41 months.

POLICY ISSUE

Should the State Water Board adopt the proposed resolution?

FISCAL IMPACT

Sufficient funds are available in the account for this project. As of December 2008, the uncommitted CAA balance is estimated to be no less than \$11 million.

REGIONAL WATER BOARD IMPACT

This project will positively impact the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the proposed resolution.

State Water Board action on this item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goal 4 of the Water Board's Strategic Plan: to comprehensively address water quality protection and restoration, and the relationship between water supply and water quality, and describe the connections between water quality, water quantity, and climate change, throughout California's water planning processes. This effort is also consistent with activities committed to in the Water Boards' Strategic Workplan for Activities in the Bay Delta: 1) development and review of a TMDL for salinity, and establishment, as appropriate, of salinity objectives in the San Joaquin River from the confluence of the Merced River to the Stanislaus River; and 2) establishment, review and implementation, as appropriate, of salinity objectives in the southern Delta.

DRAFT

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2009–

**ALLOCATION OF \$1,765,000 FROM THE CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ACCOUNT TO
THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD AND CENTRAL VALLEY
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD FOR SUPPORT OF WATER QUALITY
PLANNING EFFORTS RELATED TO SALINITY IN THE
SAN FRANCISCO BAY/SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA ESTUARY
(BAY-DELTA) AND THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER BASIN**

WHEREAS:

1. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) jointly request funding of \$1,765,000 from the Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) to support a comprehensive effort to address salinity problems in the Bay-Delta and Central Valley region. This effort will include review of and potential updates to provisions of (a) the Bay-Delta Plan concerning southern Delta salinity, and (b) the Central Valley Plan concerning San Joaquin River salinity.
2. A salinity control program for the San Joaquin River and southern Delta is needed to abate the effects of high salt concentrations in surface water and groundwater. The review, development, and implementation of salinity standards for the San Joaquin River upstream of the Delta and in the southern Delta can help to reduce salt concentrations in the river and Delta, and may help conserve fresh water supplies in the State.
3. In 2000, Revised Water Right Decision 1641 directed the Central Valley Water Board to develop water quality objectives for salinity in the Lower San Joaquin River. In 2004 the Central Valley Water Board adopted a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for salinity for the San Joaquin River at Vernalis, which is at the Delta's boundary. Efforts are currently underway to develop water quality objectives and a TMDL for salinity for the San Joaquin River upstream of Vernalis, from the confluence with the Merced River to the Stanislaus River.
4. In the southern Delta, there is a need for scientific investigation of irrigation water salinity requirements, including protection of beneficial uses and management practices. The State Water Board is currently conducting a review of southern Delta salinity objectives.

The CAA funds will be used to provide contract assistance to aid in four areas: (1) watershed-specific soil salinity modeling and evaluation of crop salinity tolerance, (2) flow/water quality modeling, (3) California Environmental Quality Act compliance, and (4) economic analysis.

5. The requested allocation is consistent with the purposes of Water Code section 13442. Section 13442 provides that the State Water Board may order monies to be paid from the CAA to a public agency with authority to clean up or abate the effects of a waste in order "to assist it in cleaning up the waste or abating its effects on waters of the state."

D R A F T

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The State Water Board approves the allocation of \$1,765,000 from the Cleanup and Abatement Account to the State Water Board and Central Valley Water Board in support of their respective updates to (a) the Bay-Delta Plan for southern Delta salinity, and (b) the Central Valley Plan for San Joaquin River salinity.

The funds will be available until March 31, 2012. Any funds remaining unexpended as of March 31, 2012, shall revert to the Cleanup and Abatement Account, unless the Deputy Director or Assistant Deputy Director for Financial Assistance authorizes an extension.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Clerk to the Board does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Board held on February 3, 2009.

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board