

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD BOARD
MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
OCTOBER 8, 2013**

ITEM 8

SUBJECT

INFORMATIONAL ITEM ON A DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD AND THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

DISCUSSION

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) staff have drafted a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) that will establish a formal, unified, and cooperative interagency relationship to promote the balancing of nitrogen use and agricultural productivity with water quality protection. The MOU will also provide a framework to enhance interagency coordination and to cultivate greater cooperation in carrying out their authorized state government responsibilities.

Staff drafted this MOU to help implement the recommendations of the State Water Board's report to the state Legislature on nitrate in the Tulare and Salinas groundwater basins. The report, released on February 20, 2013, made specific recommendations for addressing nitrate contamination in groundwater. Several of the recommendations require cooperation between CDFA and the State Water Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards). The submittal of the report was a requirement of Senate Bill X2-1 of 2008.

The Executive Director has been delegated the authority to sign the MOU. Following direction from the Board members at the Board Meeting, the Executive Director intends to sign the MOU.

POLICY ISSUE

None

FISCAL IMPACT

The signing of the MOU will not increase or decrease the budget of the State Water Board or Regional Water Boards. Although it does make several commitments to CDFA, these commitments are consistent with work the State Water Board and Regional Water Boards already plan to perform to implement the recommendations of the report.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

The MOU commits the Regional Water Boards to provide some technical assistance regarding regulatory requirements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

None - This is an informational item.

The signing of the MOU will help the State Water Board in reaching goal two of the Strategic Workplan Update: 2008-2012 to improve and protect groundwater quality in high-use basins by 2030. It also implements our principle of collaboration: "We share information, leverage funding, and seek mutual solutions, including integrated approaches, to complex water challenges through collaboration, cooperation, data-sharing, and partnerships within the Water Boards and with tribes, other agencies and jurisdictions, stakeholders, and other members of the public."