

ITEM: 12

SUBJECT: Formation of a Long-term Irrigated Lands Program Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup

BOARD ACTION: *No Board action. Information Item Only.*

BACKGROUND: In Spring 2008, Regional Water Board staff conducted a series of California Environmental Quality Act scoping meetings to get recommendations on the scope and goals of the long-term irrigated lands program. At these meetings, stakeholders expressed a desire to be actively engaged in the development of a long-term program. To address this interest, staff and CSU, Sacramento, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) convened the first long-term program Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup meeting on 9 October 2008.

The purpose of the Workgroup is to advise and provide comment to Water Board staff on the development of program alternatives and evaluation measures. Because of the large size of the Workgroup, consensus on ideas will be a goal, but not a requirement.

At the October 9 meeting there were representatives from coalitions, commodity groups, dairy industry, fertilizer industry, pesticide industry, wetland managers, irrigation/water districts, water agencies, Farm Bureau, environmental and environmental justice, tribal governments, county agricultural commissioners, and State and federal agencies.

At the initial meeting, stakeholders generally supported the formation of the Workgroup. However, there were some concerns regarding 1) how information from the Workgroup would be communicated to executive management and the Board, and 2) the desire for assurances that the staff will carefully consider Workgroup recommendations. In order to address these concerns, staff and CCP have drafted a Workgroup charter that describes the structure of the Workgroup; operating rules; and how Workgroup products and recommendations will be communicated to the Board and executive management. Board Information Items, such as this, are one component of the proposed communication plan. The draft charter and October 9 meeting summary are included as attachments b and c of this item.

RECOMMENDATION: No recommendation, information item only.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review EGW

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