

Public Workshop on Managed Wetlands Regulation

Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program

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Workshop Overview

- Purpose and Background (Staff)
- Water Board Efforts (Staff)
- **Managed Wetlands Workgroup (Panel)**
- Desired Outcomes Summary (Staff)
- Regulatory Alternatives (Staff)

Purpose of Workshop

- Why are we here?
- Managed Wetlands Workgroup
- Provide information and context for discussion and decision-making
- Present alternatives to ILRP
- Get feedback from board on regulatory alternatives

Managed Wetlands in WDR Orders

“Irrigated lands means land irrigated to produce crops or pasture used for commercial purposes [...] Irrigated lands also includes nurseries, and privately and publicly managed wetlands”

Wetlands Provisions

- Approved wetlands-specific “farm evaluation” template
- Approved wetlands-specific Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Template
- Nitrogen Management Plan exclusion
- Irrigated acres do not include non-irrigated upland habitat areas

Tulare Lk Basin Wetlands

Compliance extension for
Tulare Lake Basin wetlands to
December 31, 2015

Workgroup Representation

- California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Cosumnes River Preserve, BLM
- Ducks Unlimited
- California Waterfowl Association
- Tulare Basin Waterfowl Association
- Grasslands Water District
- Central Valley Joint Venture

Workgroup Meetings Results

- Desirable outcomes related to regulatory requirements
- Input to the Managed Wetland Evaluation Template
- Preliminary evaluation of available wetlands water quality information
- Discussion of wetlands-specific order

Water Board Efforts

- WQCC Wetlands Restoration Project Initiative
- WQMC Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
 - CA Wetlands Portal and EcoAtlas
- 5-year Coordinated Work Plan
 - Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy

Managed Wetlands TMDL Participation

- Salinity in San Joaquin Valley – participation in CV-SALTS
- Methyl mercury in Delta – participation in Mercury TMDL

Panel Presentations

- 1) Senate Bill 615
- 2) Wetlands participation in ILRP since 2003
- 3) Status of Central Valley wetlands
- 4) Wetlands Moist Soil Management
- 5) Benefits of Managed Wetlands
- 6) Central Valley Wetlands by Region
 - San Joaquin Valley
 - Tulare Lake Basin
 - Sacramento Valley and Delta

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Workgroup's Desirable Outcomes

- a) Reduction or elimination of fees
- b) Understand the constituents of concern produced and discharged by managed wetlands
- c) Monitoring that represents the effects of wetland operations on discharges

Workgroup's Desirable Outcomes

- d) Recognition of wetland monitoring conducted
- e) Recognition of managed wetlands benefits
- f) Recognition that discharge of some constituents is not controllable

Workgroup's Desirable Outcomes

- g) No reduction in wetland quality, quantity and productivity as a result of water quality regulation
- h) Recognition of state and federal mandates on wetland managers
- i) Flexible regulatory requirements that balance water quality with public trust values

Regulatory Alternatives

- 1) No additional regulatory requirements beyond participation in applicable TMDLs
- 2) Continue under current ILRP
- 3) Revise ILRP Orders to better fit wetlands water quality issues
- 4) Develop wetlands-specific order

Regulatory Alternatives

1) No additional regulatory requirements beyond participation in applicable TMDLs

- Cost relief by focusing limited resources
- Other potential water quality issues
- Limited water quality data for wetlands
- Moderately staff intensive
- Requires CEQA analysis

Regulatory Alternatives

2) Continue under current ILRP

- Least staff intensive for Regional Board
- Groundwater not a wetland issue
- Surface water program not designed to address managed wetlands
- Does not address cost concerns
- Does not address differences between agriculture and managed wetlands

Regulatory Alternatives

3) Revise ILRP Orders to better fit wetlands water quality issues

- Modify monitoring to address wetlands
- Very staff intensive process
- Does not necessarily address cost concerns
- Limited flexibility

Regulatory Alternatives

4) Develop wetlands-specific order

- Most flexibility to address unique aspects of managed wetlands
- Develop relevant monitoring requirements
- Cost concerns may not be met
- Very staff intensive
- Uncertain costs and requirements
- No third-party identified

Wrap-up

- Board Questions, Discussion and Feedback
- Next Steps
- Timing – December 2015