

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: Hearing on Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Sacramento Valley Rice Growers

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of Adoption of the Waste Discharge Requirements.*

BACKGROUND: The proposed Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) General Order for Sacramento Valley Rice Growers follows a number of already adopted orders that implement the long-term irrigated lands regulatory program. In December 2013, a board workshop was held at Rancho Cordova to receive input from the public and direction from the board. On 17 January 2014, the board circulated the tentative Order for review and comment by the public. Four comment letters were received by the 18 February deadline; letters and the staff response to comments are included in the agenda package. The tentative Order, which is included in this agenda package, has been revised in response to comments received.

Provided below is a brief summary of revisions relative to the August 2013 administrative draft and January 2014 tentative versions.

- *Rice seed.* Changes were made to the Tentative Order and Information Sheet to include discharges from lands used to grow rice for seed.
- *Coordination and cooperation with other agencies.* A finding was added to indicate that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers a number of programs related to water quality. Growers and the CRC are encouraged to utilize the information and resources available through the NRCS to meet the requirements of the Order.
- *Compliance with receiving water limitations.* Language was added recognizing that receiving water limitations also apply to trends of degradation that threaten beneficial uses. Also, text was added to clarify the conditions under which a Grower is in compliance with the Order when receiving water limitations are not being met. These changes are consistent with other irrigated lands Orders.
- *Copy of the full order.* Language mirrors requirements in other irrigated lands Orders that a hard-copy or electronic version of the Order must be maintained by Growers.
- *Revised groundwater monitoring section:* The Information Sheet has been modified to clarify the groundwater monitoring required by the MRP.
- *Evaluating Management Practices.* Changes to the Information Sheet have been made to show that information to be provided by Growers will allow for the evaluation of management practice implementation and effectiveness.
- *Surface and Groundwater Management plans.* Changes to the Order have been made to clarify that the management plans serve as work plans identifying corrective actions to be taken by Growers to come into compliance. Management plans do not establish new requirements or compliance schedules not already included in the Order.
- *68-16.* Additional discussion has been added to the Information Sheet to

explain the Order's consistency with antidegradation (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) requirements.

- *Summation of costs regarding per acre State fee.* The summation of costs has been adjusted to reflect a change in State fees from \$0.56 per acre to \$0.75 per acre.
- *Corrections and other revisions.* A number of minor errors have been corrected and minor changes made.

***Remaining Issues***

The remaining issues and proposed resolution thereof are described in the comment letters and staff response to comments.

**RECOMMENDATION**      Adopt the proposed waste discharge requirements.

Mgmt. Review \_\_JK\_\_\_\_  
Legal Review \_\_APM\_\_\_\_  
27/28 March  
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Meeting  
11020 Sun Center Dr. #200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670