

ITEM: 9

SUBJECT: Status of Proposed General Order for Confined Bovine Feeding Operations

BOARD ACTION: Information Item Only

BACKGROUND: Confined bovine feeding operations include beef cattle stockyards, finishing yards, and/or auction yards; calf ranches; dairy heifer operations; and veal calf facilities. Manure and wastewater generated by these operations has the potential to cause significant impacts to surface and groundwater quality if not managed carefully. The number of these operations within the Central Valley Region is not known, but Board staff estimate that at least 800 facilities are currently operational. In the past, Central Valley Water Board staff, working with wardens from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and county District Attorneys, has taken enforcement actions against bovine operations which have discharged to surface water. However, confined bovine feeding operations as a whole have not been regulated under a General Order.

In the draft currently being developed, the proposed General Order would apply to bovine operations having 100 or more Animal Units on site and where animals representing 100 or more Animal Units are sold within a 12 month period. An Animal Unit is the equivalent of 1,000 pounds of animal weight, or the weight of an average heifer. The proposed Order would apply to existing operations and also to operations that commence in the future, or which expand their operations, provided that the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been satisfied for the new or expanding operation(s).

The proposed General Order would impose conditions to protect water quality. Some of these conditions include requiring operators to prepare a Waste Management Plan that will address the Production Area and a Nutrient Management Plan that will address the Land Application Area. The proposed General Order would require the monitoring of groundwater and of discharges to surface

water, either by the individual operation or by a joint program or coalition.

A tentative General Order will be released for public review in March 2016.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff will prepare a tentative General Order for public review incorporating Board member comments.

Mgmt. Review_____

Legal Review____ASD____

18/19 February 2016
11020 Sun Center Dr. #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670