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**[TENTATIVE] WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER
R5-2026-XXXX**



ORDER INFORMATION

Order Type(s):	Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs)
Status:	Tentative
Program:	Groundwater Quality Protection Program
Region 5 Office:	Fresno
Discharger(s):	Harris Ranch Beef Company and Tri West Investments, LLC
Facility:	Selma Beef Processing Facility
Address:	16277 South McCall Avenue, Selma, CA 93662
County:	Fresno County
Parcel Nos.:	See Attachment A
Prior Order(s):	R5-2017-0021, 90-183, 78-10, and 60-41

CERTIFICATION

I, PATRICK PULUPA, Executive Officer, hereby certify that the following is a full, true, and correct copy of the order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, on 10/11 December 2026.

PATRICK PULUPA,
Executive Officer

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GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

APN(s).....	Assessor Parcel Number(s)
Antidegradation Policy.....	Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California, State Water Board Resolution 68-16
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for Tulare Lake Basin
bgs	Below Ground Surface
BOD[5]	[Five-Day] Biochemical Oxygen Demand at 20° Celsius
BPTC.....	Best Practicable Treatment or Control
CEQA.....	California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.
CEQA Guidelines	California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15000 et seq.
COC[s]	Constituent[s] of Concern
DAF	Dissolved Air Flotation
DO.....	Dissolved Oxygen
DWR.....	California Department of Water Resources
EC	Electrical Conductivity
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FDS	Fixed Dissolved Solids
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
gpd	Gallons Per Day
LAA(s)	Land Application Area(s)
lbs/ac/yr.....	Pounds per Acre per Year
µg/L	Micrograms per Liter
µmhos/cm.....	Micromhos per Centimeter
mgd	Million Gallons [per Day]
mg/L	Milligrams per Liter
MRP	Monitoring and Reporting Program
MW.....	Monitoring Well
MCL.....	Maximum Contaminant Level per Title 22
MUN	Municipal and Domestic Supply Beneficial Use

GLOSSARY

N.....	Nitrogen
NCP.....	Nitrate Control Program
R[O]WD.....	Report of Waste Discharge
RCRA.....	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
SPRRs	Standard Provisions and Reporting Requirements
SERC	State Emergency Response Commission
TDS	Total Dissolved Solids
Title 22	California Code of Regulations, Title 22
Title 23	California Code of Regulations, Title 23
Title 27	California Code of Regulations, Title 27
TKN.....	Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen
Unified Guidance.....	Statistical Analysis of Groundwater Monitoring Data at RCRA Facilities, Unified Guidance (USEPA, 2009)
USEPA.....	United States Environmental Protection Agency
WDRs.....	Waste Discharge Requirements
WQO[s]	Water Quality Objective[s]

FINDINGS

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) hereby finds as follows:

Introduction

1. Harris Ranch Beef Company (Harris), a California corporation, submitted a 22 May 2025 report of waste discharge (September RWD) requesting authorization to expand the land application area that receives wastewater from its Selma Beef Processing Facility (Facility). Harris owns and operates the Facility located just south of the community of Selma in Fresno County at 16277 South McCall Avenue, Section 31, Township 16 South, Range 22 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.
2. WDRs Order R5-2017-0021, adopted on 24 February 2017, previously regulated the discharge of up to 1.0 million gallons per day (mgd) of process wastewater generated from the Facility to 186 acres of land application areas (LAAs) planted with a combination of forage crops such as corn/Sudan grass and winter forage (e.g., triticale, wheat, oats, barley).
3. The previous WDRs Order also described improvements to the Facility which included the construction of an improved wastewater treatment facility, consist of a dissolved air flotation unit (DAF), an anaerobic digester with a biogas reuse system, an aerated activated sludge system, a clarifier, and the construction of two double-lined effluent storage ponds. These treatment system improvements were completed after the adoption of WDRs Order R5-2017-0021.
4. The Facility and available LAAs authorized by WDRs Order R5-2017-0021 are owned by Harris. Proposed additional LAA parcels are owned by Harris and Tri West Investments, LLC (Tri West) and provide an additional 39 acres for the application of wastewater from the Facility. Parcel information and ownership are summarized in **Table 4** below. Harris and Tri West, as owners of the Facility and LAAs are referred to as Discharger, collectively, for the purposes of this Order.
5. The Discharger, as owners and/or operators of the Facility and LAAs, are responsible for compliance with the WDRs prescribed herein.
6. The following materials are attached and incorporated as part of this Order:
 - a. Attachment A – Site Location Map
 - b. Attachment B – Field ID Map
 - c. Attachment C – Facility Map

- d. Attachment D – Process Flow Schematic
 - e. Attachment E – Treatment System Site Map
 - f. Attachment F – Potentiometric Surface Map
 - g. Standard Provisions & Reporting Requirements dated 1 March 1991 (SPRRs)
 - h. Information Sheet
 - i. Monitoring and Reporting Program R5-2026-XXXX
7. Also attached is **Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) Order No. R5-2026-XXXX**, which requires monitoring and reporting for discharges regulated under these WDRs.
8. WDRs Order R5-2017-0012 does not reflect the current discharge quality due to removal of the “Cook Plant” processing operations, nor does it authorize the additional LAA available for the application of wastewater. Additionally, the Discharger has indicated that the flow limit prescribed by WDRs Order (1.0 mgd) is inconsistent with the actual 0.75 mgd treatment design capacity of the Facility’s wastewater system. The revised WDRs herein are necessary to reflect existing operations at the Facilities and ensure the discharge meets the requirements of current water quality plans and policies.

Regulatory History

9. The Facility property has a long history of use as a beef processing facility with meat processing activities conducted at the site since the mid-1900’s. The earliest record of the site is from 1953, from which Fresno County records show that the property was operated by a company doing business as the “Selma Dressed Beef Company.” The earliest WDRs Order on record was WDRs Order 60-41 issued to the Diamond Meat Company. WDRs Order 78-10 was also issued to the Diamond Meat Company on 27 January 1978 and authorized the discharge of up to 0.27 million gallons per day of process wastewater to 2.5 acres of stabilization ponds and to about 40 acres of farmland used to grow corn, cotton, and row crops.
10. Harris commenced operation of the Facility in 1986 under WDRs Order 78-10, which was later revised by WDRs Order 90-183 and increased the permitted wastewater flow limited to 1.0 mgd. WDRs Order 90-183 was deemed outdated and replaced by WDR Order R5-2017-0021, which authorized upgrades identified in previous findings.

Cease and Desist Order R5-2017-0012

11. Cease and Desist Order (CDO) R5-2017-0012 was adopted with WDRs Order R5-2017-0021 on 24 February 2017 and required the Discharger to cease discharging in violation of WDRs, particularly with respect to electrical conductivity (EC), total dissolved solids, and nitrate. It also required the completion of the proposed improvements specified in the WDRs Order by February 2022. The Discharger completed all proposed improvements by 2021, which are intended to reduce the threat of groundwater impacts with regard to salinity and nitrate in groundwater.
12. The CDO also required the Discharger to assess the horizontal and vertical extents of elevated EC, TDS, and nitrate concentrations in groundwater beneath and downgradient of the Facility's LAAs. In accordance with timelines specified by the CDO, the Discharger submitted a Groundwater Assessment Workplan (GW Workplan) on 26 February 2018, and then a revised Groundwater Assessment Workplan on 17 May 2018. Staff directed the Discharger to proceed with the work described in the revised GW Workplan in a 15 August 2018 letter.
13. The Discharger completed the work outlined in the revised GW workplan, which included on- and offsite groundwater monitoring of dedicated monitoring wells and nearby private wells, and direct-push testing. The results of this work were included in a 12 November 2020 Groundwater Assessment Report that documented elevated nitrate and salt (EC and TDS) concentrations in groundwater beneath and downgradient of the Facility's LAAs.
14. While the Discharger is an active participant in the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs, which is discussed in further detail later, additional groundwater characterization is necessary to better evaluate concentration trends and determine the degree to which past and current Facility operations may be contributing to observed conditions. Additionally, and discussed in more detail in later findings, salt conditions observed in downgradient onsite monitoring wells are elevated and nitrogen is increasing in one downgradient well. Therefore, this Order includes Provision J.7, which requires the Discharger to prepare and implement an updated Groundwater Workplan for assessing the current groundwater conditions, particularly for salts and nitrogen, downgradient of the LAAs.

2025 Reports of Waste Discharge

15. On 22 May 2025, the Discharger submitted a RWD to add approximately 39 acres of LAA to the existing LAA. Staff notified the Discharger that the May 2025 RWD was incomplete in a 20 June 2025 letter and requested the discharger submit a revised RWD that addressed constituent loading rates and

treatment system performance, managing permitted flows, and compliance with the CV-SALTS program.

16. On 19 September 2025, a revised RWD was submitted with additional information and described a material change in the wastewater quality due to closure of the Facility's Cook Plant, which contributed to the waste stream. The September 2025 RWD also indicated that the Facility's treatment capacity is 0.75 mgd, which is inconsistent with the previously permitted wastewater flow authorized by WDRs Order R5-2017-0021. Following review of the revised September RWD, staff found that the RWD remained incomplete, because it did not fully address previous commentary, and clarification was needed with regard to the inconsistency between the Facility's permitted wastewater flow and actual treatment capacity.
17. On 28 October 2025, staff conducted a site inspection and found that all components of the wastewater treatment facility appeared to be in good condition. There were no objectionable odors present beyond the immediate vicinity of the treatment system.
18. On 1 December 2025, a revised RWD was submitted with additional information that addressed deficiencies in the previously incomplete RWDs.

Existing Facility and Discharges

19. Processing operations at the Facility occur 312 days per year, and approximately 6,000 cattle are processed per week. The Facility is designed to treat up to 0.75 mgd of process wastewater. Based on the number of operational days per year and the maximum treatment capacity, the total annual discharge volume may be up to 234 million gallons of process wastewater per year. Domestic waste generated at the Facility is managed by individual onsite septic systems regulated by Fresno County.
20. The process wastewater discharge from the Facility consists of two wastewater streams. The first waste stream is generated from livestock receiving operations, such as live cattle washing and receiving area washdown (Receiving Stream). The second wastewater stream is generated from various processes within the Facility, including the kill floor, tripe processing, carcass washing, the boning room, condensers, boilers, cooling towers, truck washes, and Facility sanitation activities (Process Stream). Any stormwater which contacts processing surfaces, receiving areas, products, or waste is considered wastewater regulated by these WDRs and is included in the wastewater streams sent to the Facility's treatment system. The Facility previously included a Cook Plant that generated a waste stream; however, Cook Plant activities ceased in June 2025.

21. Wastewater treatment components at the Facility consist of collection sumps, screens, equalization and flocculation tanks, a DAF treatment unit, an anaerobic digester, a series of concrete anaerobic, anoxic, and aerobic treatment cells, a post anoxic denitrification unit, a clarifier, and two lined effluent storage ponds. The double lined effluent storage ponds have a combined capacity of 84.8 million gallons.
22. Both waste streams from the Facility pass through separate rotary screens to remove larger solids from the Process Stream, and manure and grit from the Receiving Stream. Following screening, both streams are conveyed and comingled at a concrete lined central sump. A float level actuated pump conveys wastewater from the central sump to an equalization tank and then a flocculation tank prior to treatment within the DAF unit for further solids removal. Following DAF treatment, wastewater is directed to a lined and covered anaerobic digester where the wastewater is treated under anaerobic conditions. The retention time within the anaerobic digester is approximately 10 days.
23. Wastewater from the digester is then pumped through a concrete structure consisting of series of anaerobic, anoxic, and aerobic treatment cells. Following aeration, wastewater is directed to a post anoxic basin to undergo denitrification facilitated by the addition of an organic carbon source. The carbon source can be from wastewater or glycerin obtained from an offsite food processor. The December RWD indicates that the Discharger identified a reliable high carbon glycerin source that was integrated into the treatment system in 2024, resulting in significant nitrogen reductions in the wastewater. The wastewater then passes through a clarifier to remove scum and sludge. Sludge from the clarifier and aeration basins may also be returned to the first anoxic basin to help facilitate nutrient removal.
24. The clarified effluent is then directed to two double lined storage ponds prior to being used to irrigate crops at the LAA. A facility map and process flow schematic are included as **Attachments C** and **Attachment D**, respectively.
25. The two effluent storage ponds (South Storage Pond and North Storage Pond) and the anaerobic digester were constructed with a geosynthetic double liner consisting of a 60-mil High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) primary layer over a 60-mil conductive HDPE bottom layer with a 200-mil HDPE geonet material placed between the primary and secondary layers. The anaerobic digester and effluent storage ponds are also equipped with a leachate collection and removal system (LCRS) set below the primary liner and a pan lysimeter set below the secondary liner. The LCRS systems consist of a 590-gallon sump with a submersible pump. According to an 18 May 2020 Tier 1 Double Lined Lagoon Design Report (Tier 1 Pond Report) for the digester and storage ponds, the LCRS Action Leakage Rates (ALRs) are 0.7 and 2.7 gallons per minute (gpm), respectively. **Table 1**

shows the approximate dimensions and volume of the digester and effluent storage ponds.

Table 1 – Storage Ponds and Digester Dimensions

Pond Name (Pond Function)	Dimensions (L x W x H in feet)	Volume (million gallons)
North Storage (Effluent Storage)	570 x 480 x 31	42.4
South Storage (Effluent Storage)	570 x 480 x 31	42.4
Digester (Anaerobic Digester)	365 x 250 x 20	7.9

26. None of the solids generated from processing or treatment operations at the Facility are applied to the LAA. Solids, fats, oils, and grease recovered from the DAF unit are stored in containers before being transported offsite for further processing at a rendering facility. Any wasted sludge or solids removed using screens or from the clarifier are hauled offsite for disposal at an appropriately permitted facility.
27. Reported monthly average wastewater flows generated at the Facility from 2020 through 2024 are shown in **Table 2**. Average monthly flows ranged from 0.13 mgd to 0.85 mgd with an annual average flow of about 0.59 mgd. The total annual flow in 2021 exceeded the proposed annual flow of 234 million gallons, and the cause of this high flow is unclear. Since then, the total annual flows have remained below the proposed annual flow limit.

Table 2 – Monthly Average & Total Annual Wastewater Flow to Ponds (mgd)

Month/Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	0.61	0.59	0.58	0.63	0.52	0.47
February	0.61	0.68	0.65	0.63	0.55	0.44
March	0.62	0.69	0.67	0.70	0.50	0.44
April	0.66	0.66	0.58	0.59	0.54	0.46
May	0.85	0.62	0.49	0.56	0.52	0.41
June	0.13	0.70	0.60	0.62	0.52	0.42
July	0.53	0.70	0.79	0.63	0.51	0.37
August	0.64	0.66	0.60	0.59	0.52	0.38
September	0.62	0.64	0.54	0.56	0.51	0.39
October	0.61	0.66	0.63	0.57	0.52	0.41
November	0.54	0.64	0.53	0.56	0.52	0.36
December	0.56	0.69	0.56	0.53	0.44	0.40

Month/Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Annual Volume (Million Gallons)	213.4	238.8	212.5	198.3	183.8	150.4

28. The RWD included a water balance to demonstrate the Facility's ability to manage the proposed max daily flow of 0.75 mgd, and the total annual flow of 234 million gallons. The water balance considered proposed wastewater flows, the 100-year return precipitation, potential crop evapotranspiration, a 6 percent leaching fraction, and an irrigation efficiency factor of 65 percent. Given that the ponds are lined, percolation during storage is considered to be zero. The water balance considers a total anticipated crop hydraulic demand to the LAA of 271.41 million gallons per year, which is more than the total annual maximum wastewater flow of 234 million gallons. Based on the Discharger's water balance, the crops at the LAAs need more irrigation water than can be provided by the discharge. Additionally, the water balance indicates that the storage ponds have adequate volume to manage the proposed wastewater flows while maintaining two feet of freeboard and one foot of sludge accumulation, even under 100-year precipitation conditions.
29. Average influent and effluent quality (with Cook Plant operations and post-Cook Plant operations) for the Facility compared to applicable water quality objectives (WQOs) is summarized in Table 3 below. Average influent quality data represents samples collected between January 2021 and October 2025. Average effluent quality data with Cook Plant operations is from samples collected between January 2021 and August 2024. Effluent quality data post-Cook Plant is from samples collected following cessation of Cook Plant operations between July 2025 and June 2026.

Table 3 – Current and Proposed Effluent Quality

Constituent	Average Influent Quality	Average Effluent Quality (With Cook Plant)	Average Effluent Quality (Post Cook Plant)	WQOs
EC (µmhos/cm)	1,515	1,857	1,557	700 (Ag) 900 sMCL
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD ₅)	3,060	262	22	--
Ammonia (as N)	36	56	2	--
Nitrate (as N)	2	19	2	10
TKN	265	68	6	--

Constituent	Average Influent Quality	Average Effluent Quality (With Cook Plant)	Average Effluent Quality (Post Cook Plant)	WQOs
Total Nitrogen	266	33	9	--
Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)	1,607	1,040	887	500 1,000 1,500 (see 2 below)
Fixed Dissolved Solids (FDS)	624	771	682	--

1. Units are in mg/L unless otherwise specified.
2. Recommended lower, upper, and short-term WQOs for TDS.

30. Based on the available data, concentrations of nitrogen, salinity and organic constituents in the effluent have been reduced since cessation of the Cook Plant activities at the Facility. In particular, there has been significant reductions in nitrogen and BOD₅ concentrations. The December RWD attributes the improved effluent quality to better operational oversight and management of the treatment system, and the introduction of a reliable high carbon glycerin source to facilitate increased denitrification in 2024.

Land Application Areas

31. The current LAA is approximately 235 acres (154 net farmable acres) and is dual cropped with Sudan grass or silage corn in the summer and winter forage in the winter. The LAA currently receives up to 234 million gallons per year of wastewater via surface irrigation (i.e., boarder checks and/or furrows). Supplemental irrigation is provided by onsite irrigation wells and conveyed to the LAA via underground pipelines.
32. The Discharger also proposes to increase the LAA by an additional 39 acres for a total of 275 acres of LAA's (190 net farmable acres) as shown in Attachment B. The use of the existing and proposed LAA parcels and the associated landowners are provided in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - List of Land Application Areas

APN	Total Acreage	Owner	Status/Usage
393-141-06	78	Harris Ranch Beef Company	Existing/LAA

APN	Total Acreage	Owner	Status/Usage
393-141-08S	20	Harris Ranch Beef Company	Existing/Ponds
393-141-09S	33	Harris Ranch Beef Company	Existing/Facility
393-141-10S	27	Harris Ranch Beef Company	Existing/Facility& LAA
393-141-13	79	Harris Ranch Beef Company	Existing/LAA
393-141-11	20	Tri West Investments, LLC	New/LAA
393-141-12	2	Harris Ranch Beef Company	New/LAA
393-141-14	15	Tri West Investments, LLC	New/LAA
393-141-15	2	Tri West Investments, LLC	New/LAA
Total	275	--	--

33. The December 2025 RWD included nitrogen, salt, and organic (BOD) loading estimates to the LAA, which are discussed further in the following findings. Loading estimates considered the maximum annual discharge volume, and the quality of stored effluent since cessation of Cook Plant operations. The LAA will be cropped with Sudan grass or silage corn in the summer and winter forage in the winter.
34. To evaluate nitrogen loading to the LAAs, the Discharger's calculated the nitrogen balance (A-R) and the ratio of applied to removed nitrogen (A/R) using the maximum proposed wastewater flow, a projected total Kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN) concentration of 7 mg/L, and ammonia volatilization and denitrification rates of 5 percent each. The assessment, summarized in Table 5, shows a net negative nitrogen balance after crop uptake, indicating that wastewater alone will not supply sufficient nitrogen to meet agronomic demand and that supplemental fertilizer will be required. Nitrogen removal rates were derived from a literature review conducted by Dr. Daniel Geisseler (CDFA FREP, 2016; updated 2021). Although the Discharger's calculation considered only TKN and excluded nitrate and nitrite, the post Cook Plant effluent total nitrogen concentration (9 mg/L) is comparable; therefore, total nitrogen loading is expected to align with the Discharger's assessment.

Table 5 - Projected Nitrogen Loading Rates

Parameter	Total Nitrogen (lbs)	Unit
Applied	131	lb/ac/yr

Parameter	Total Nitrogen (lbs)	Unit
Removed	566	lb/ac/yr
A-R	-435	lb/ac/yr
A/R	.23	---

35. Similarly, the Discharger estimated annual salt loading to the LAA from wastewater and supplemental fresh irrigation water. Wastewater contribution of FDS is based on the total proposed annual flow to the LAAs (234 million gallons) and the projected FDS wastewater concentration of 684 mg/L. Supplemental irrigation water FDS loading is based on the source water well quality for FDS (307 mg/L) and the remaining hydraulic crop demand. The RWD notes that the proposed wastewater discharge to the LAAs will result in salt loadings (as FDS) of about 6,700 pounds per acre per year (lbs/ac/yr) from the effluent, and about 1,100 lbs/ac/yr from supplemental irrigation water, as summarized in Table 8.

Table 6 - Projected Salt (as FDS) Loading

FDS Source	FDS Load to LAA (lb/ac/yr)
Effluent	6,738
Supplemental Irrigation Water	1,119
Total	7,851

36. The Discharger noted in the RWD that irrigation will be managed seasonally based on crop water demand, soil available water-holding capacity, and storage pond freeboard requirements. Because irrigation frequency and depth will vary throughout the year, no single fixed irrigation cycle or application rate is anticipated. Mass loading estimates presented in the RWD indicate that cycle average BOD loading rates as low as 1 lb/ac/day may be achieved over a 30-day cycle. Staff BOD loading estimates considering shorter irrigation cycles indicate that cycle average loads below 50 lbs/ac/day may be reliably achieved. For example, applying a peak monthly BOD load of 5,438 pounds over 10 irrigation days followed by 10 rest days to one-third of the LAA acreage would result in an average loading rate of approximately 4.3 lbs/ac/day.

Site-Specific Conditions

Topography, Climate and Land Use

37. The land surface in the area of the Facility and the land application areas are generally flat, with a slight regional slope to the southwest. The elevation of the Facility is about 280 feet above mean sea level with the elevation dropping to

about 275 feet above mean seal level at the southwest corner of the southern land application area.

38. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [Flood Insurance Rate Map](https://msc.fema.gov/portal) (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal>) Fresno County, Community Panels 06019C2675H and 06019C2950J are within Zone X flood area, which indicates an area that is outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain. The Cole Slough, a branch of the Kings River is located about 2.5 miles south/southeast of the Facility.
39. Soils in the land application areas are comprised primarily of the Hesperia sandy loam according to the Web Soil Survey published by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Hesperia sandy loam is described as well drained with a high capacity to transmit water. The Hesperia sandy loam is described as a Class 2s soil. Class 2 soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices. The "s" subclass indicates the soil is limited mainly because it is shallow, droughty, or stony.
40. The Selma - Kingsburg area is characterized as semi-arid with hot dry summers and cooler winters. The rainy season generally extends from November through March. Available data from the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) indicate the average annual precipitation and 100-year return precipitation for the area are approximately 11 inches and 22 inches, respectively, and the mean referenced evapotranspiration rate observed at the nearby Parlier station is about 53 inches per year.
41. Land uses in the vicinity of the WWTF are primarily agricultural. The primary crops grown in the area are field crops, pasture, and tree crops including almonds, apples, apricots, cherries, figs, peaches, pistachios, plums, prunes, and walnuts, according to data published by the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

Groundwater and Subsurface Conditions

42. Information on regional depth to groundwater and groundwater elevation maps are available on the [DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Data Viewer](https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=SGMADataViewer#gwlevels) (<https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=SGMADataViewer#gwlevels>). The direction of regional groundwater flow is generally to the west, with some years showing flow direction to the northwest or southwest. These minor changes in the flow direction maybe be due to the influence from the Kings River located approximately 2.5 miles south of the facility. Groundwater elevation contours for spring 2024 and 2025 show groundwater flows generally to the west with depth-to-groundwater underlying the Facility between 80 and 90 feet below ground surface (bgs).

43. Source water used for processing and cleaning operations at the Facility is provided by an onsite groundwater well referred to as the Source Well. According to available records from the State Water Resources Control Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment (GAMA) Program database, the Source Well was constructed with a 280-foot screened interval from 360 to 640 feet bgs. Source Well water quality data collected from April 2019 through October 2025 were provided in the December RWD and are summarized in **Table 7**.

Table 7 - Facility Source Water Quality

Constituent	Average	Range	No. of samples	WQOs
EC (µmhos/cm)	225	175 – 298	14	700 (Ag) 900 sMCL
TDS (mg/L)	166	81 – 390	22	1,000 (Upper Level) 1,500 (Short Term Level)
FDS (mg/L)	104	36 – 160	9	---
Sodium (mg/L)	24	21 – 25	6	690 (Ag)
Chloride (mg/L)	12	12 – 12	6	250 (sMCL)
Calcium (mg/L)	18	17 – 19	25	---
Potassium (mg/L)	2	2 – 2	6	---
Nitrate as N (mg/L)	3	2.6 – 3.4	22	10 (MCL)
Total Nitrogen	3	2.6 – 5.5	23	---
Bicarbonate (mg/L as CaCO ₃)	57	52 – 61	24	---
Sulfate (mg/L)	5	4 – 5.3	6	250 (sMCL)

44. Facility source water is good quality with respect to all constituents. Even range maximums for each constituent meet applicable WQOs.
45. The December RWD indicates supplemental irrigation water is sourced, as needed, from three onsite ground water wells. The three wells are identified as Well 1-1, Well 2-2, and Well 3-4. The December RWD reported irrigation water quality information for nitrate, FDS, and EC, which is summarized in **Table 8** below.

Table 8 - Irrigation Source Water Quality

Constituent	Units	Range	Average
Nitrate as N	mg/L	7.7 – 11.4	10
FDS	mg/L	217 – 354	307
EC	µmhos/cm	466 – 759	648

46. The average supplemental irrigation water quality pumped from the three irrigation wells generally meets WQOs, but the upper limits observed for nitrate and EC exceed respective WQOs (10 mg/L and 700 μ mhos/cm, respectively), and their average concentrations are at or approaching their respective WQOs.
47. WDRs Order R5-2017-0021 required the Discharger to establish a groundwater monitoring network at the Facility. The groundwater monitoring network consists of seven onsite wells and six offsite wells, some of which have experienced dry conditions. The Discharger designates wells as “inactive” if dry conditions are encountered at a monitoring well for four consecutive quarterly sampling events.
48. The December 2025 RWD indicates all offsite wells are inactive (dry). Of the seven onsite wells, two are upgradient and five are downgradient relative to the LAAs, ponds, and the Facility. The two upgradient monitoring wells are MW-2 and MW-5, and the RWD indicates that MW-2 is inactive. MW-5 is at the northeast corner of the property and serves as the singular upgradient monitoring well. Of the five downgradient wells, two are dry and the remaining active wells are MW-1R, MW-3, and MW-4R. MW-3 is downgradient of the Facility but is adjacent to a storm water retention pond, which likely influences water quality in the well. MW-4R is south and downgradient of the Facility and set midway along the southern boundary of the LAA. MW-1R is downgradient of the Facility, the effluent storage ponds, and a majority of the LAAs.
49. Well construction details and the most recent depth to water measurements for active and inactive wells are summarized in **Table 9** below. An aerial photo that depicts the locations of the onsite groundwater monitoring wells, the groundwater elevation contours as of October 2024, and the groundwater flow direction is included as **Attachment F**.

Table 9 - Groundwater Monitoring Well Construction Details

Well Name	Status/ Onsite or Offsite	Date Drilled	Drilled Depth (feet)	Screened Interval (feet)	Up/Down gradient	Depth to Groundwater (feet)
MW-1	Inactive/ Onsite	1997	97.5	46.5-96.5	Downgradient	Dry Since 2015
MW-1R	Active/ Onsite	2017	122	82-122	Downgradient	95 (June 2025)
MW-2	Inactive/ Onsite	2009	95	55-95	Upgradient	89 (Jan 2025)
MW-3	Active/ Onsite	2009	95	55-95	Downgradient	92 (June 2025)
MW-4	Inactive/ Onsite	2009	95	55-95	Downgradient	Dry Since 2022 (Jan 2025)

Well Name	Status/ Onsite or Offsite	Date Drilled	Drilled Depth (feet)	Screened Interval (feet)	Up/Down gradient	Depth to Groundwater (feet)
MW-4R	Active/ Onsite	2017	125	85-125	Downgradient	96 (Jan 2025)
MW-5	Active/ Onsite	2017	112	72-112	Upgradient	90 (June 2025)
MW-6S	Inactive/ Off Onsite	2019	94	74-94	Upgradient	79 (July 2025)
MW-6D	Inactive/ Off Onsite	2019	130	115-125	Upgradient	80 (July 2020)
MW-7S	Inactive/ Off Site	2019	110	86-106	Downgradient	83 (July 2020)
MW-7D	Inactive/ Off Site	2019	130.5	125-130	Downgradient	83 (July 2020)
MW-8S	Inactive/ Off Site	2019	115	95-115	Downgradient	87 (July 2020)
MW-8D	Inactive/ Off Site	2019	140.5	135-140	Downgradient	87 (July 2020)

50. The December 2025 RWD included groundwater monitoring data for the active monitoring wells at the Facility, as summarized in Table 10 below. The data presented are averages of samples collected from each active well from December 2017 through October 2024. Sampling dates for MW-3 range from January 2011 through October 2024, excluding July 2022 through November 2023, when the well was reportedly dry. The Discharger also analyzes groundwater samples for metals (i.e., iron, manganese, and arsenic); however, these data are not presented in Table 10 since all monitoring wells have reported non-detect metals concentrations since 2021, with the exception of two detections of iron in MW-5 in January 2021 and May 2023. The detected concentrations of iron were 32 µg/L and 44 µg/L, respectively, both well below the applicable WQO of 300 µg/L.

Table 10 - Groundwater Quality from On-Site Wells

Parameter (see 1 below)	Source Well	MW-5	MW-1R	MW-4R	MW-3
Up or Down Gradient	--	Up	Down	Down	Down
EC (µmhos/cm)	225	564	1,438	2,197	1,244
Chloride	12	16.8	78	159	49
Sodium	24	39.8	98	171	80

Parameter (see 1 below)	Source Well	MW-5	MW-1R	MW-4R	MW-3
Up or Down Gradient	--	Up	Down	Down	Down
TDS	166	400	951	1,486	834
Nitrate as N	3	13	54	101	41
Total Nitrogen	3	12	53	100	41

1. Units are in mg/L unless otherwise specified.

51. Based on the observed groundwater monitoring data, the downgradient wells have higher concentrations of constituents relative to the Source Well and upgradient well MW-5. Additionally, the 2025 fourth quarter monitoring report for the Facility includes time series graphs that indicate the increased downgradient concentrations of salt is statistically different than upgradient conditions. The recent report also shows that total nitrogen conditions in downgradient well MW-1R have increased since the 2019 Groundwater Assessment Report, while observed concentrations in MW-3 and MW-4 are relatively stable and appear to be decreasing, respectively.
52. Prior to construction of the treatment system and lined storage ponds in 2021, wastewater from the Facility was discharged directly to unlined ponds for disposal. Comparison of these data indicate that legacy impacts to groundwater from historical Facility discharges have influenced groundwater quality observed in the monitoring wells. Given that monitoring indicates statistically different salt concentrations in downgradient monitoring wells and increasing nitrogen in MW-1R, this Order includes Provision J.7, which requires the Discharger to submit and implement an updated technical workplan to re-evaluate the extent of elevated salt (EC and TDS) and nitrogen in groundwater downgradient of the LAAs. The required workplan is intended to identify the current extent of groundwater degradation from historic Facility discharges and the potential need for Management Zone (discussed more below) intervention for downgradient users, and ensure that current and historical discharges do not continue to contribute to further degradation of groundwater downgradient of the LAAs. However, given that the significant treatment system upgrades producing better effluent quality, the proposed expansion of the LAAs, and the Discharger's participation in the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs (discussed more below), it's anticipated that groundwater conditions will improve over time.

Legal Authorities

53. The ability to discharge waste is a privilege, not a right, and adoption of this Order shall not be construed as creating a vested right to continue discharging waste. (Water Code, § 13263, subd. (g).)

54. This Order, in part, and its associated MRP are adopted pursuant to Water Code section 13267, subdivision (b)(1), which provides as follows:

[T]he regional board may require that any person who has discharged, discharges, or is suspected of having discharged or discharging, or who proposes to discharge waste ... shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical or monitoring program reports which the regional board requires. The burden, including costs, of these reports, shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the report and the benefits to be obtained from the reports. In requiring those reports, the regional board shall provide the person with a written explanation regarding the need for the reports and shall identify the evidence that supports requiring that person to provide the reports.

The reports required under this Order, as well as under the separately issued MRP, are necessary to verify and ensure compliance with WDRs. The burden associated with such reports is reasonable relative to the need for their submission.

55. This Order is adopted pursuant to Water Code section 13263, subdivision (a), which provides, in pertinent part, as follows:

The regional board, after any necessary hearing, shall prescribe requirements as to the nature of any proposed discharge, existing discharge, or material change in an existing discharge..., with relation to the conditions existing in the disposal area or receiving waters upon, or into which, the discharge is made or proposed. The requirements shall implement any relevant water quality control plans that have been adopted, and shall take into consideration the beneficial uses to be protected, the water quality objectives reasonably required for that purpose, other waste discharges, the need to prevent nuisance, and the provisions of [Water Code] Section 13241.

56. Compliance with section 13263, subdivision (a), including implementation of applicable water quality control plans, is discussed in the findings below.

Basin Plan Implementation

Beneficial Uses of Water

57. This Order implements the Central Valley Water Board's Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin (Basin Plan), which designates beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater and establishes WQOs) necessary to preserve such beneficial uses. (See Wat. Code, § 13241 et seq.)

58. The Facility is within the Consolidated Hydrologic Area (No. 551.70), as depicted on interagency hydrologic maps prepared by the State Water Board. Local drainage is to the Kings River. Per the Basin Plan, beneficial uses of underlying groundwater in the vicinity of the Facility are municipal and domestic supply (MUN), agricultural supply (AGR), industrial service supply (IND), and industrial process supply (PRO).

Water Quality Objectives (WQOs)

59. The Basin Plan establishes a numeric WQO for total coliform organisms in groundwater and narrative WQOs for chemical constituents, tastes and odors, and toxicity in groundwater.
60. The numeric WQO for bacteria is expressed as the most probable number (MPN) of coliform organisms per 100 mL of water. For MUN-designated groundwater, the objective is an MPN of 2.2 organisms over any seven-day period.
61. The narrative WQO for chemical constituents in groundwater generally provides that groundwater shall not contain constituents in concentrations adversely affecting beneficial uses. For MUN-designated waters, the Basin Plan further provides that water, at a minimum, meets the primary and secondary maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) specified in California Code of Regulations, title 22 (Title 22), sections 64431, 64444, and 64449. The Central Valley Water Board may apply limits more stringent than MCLs to ensure that waters do not contain chemical constituents in concentrations that adversely affect beneficial uses.
62. The narrative WQO for tastes and odors in groundwater provides that groundwater shall not contain taste- or odor-producing substances in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.
63. The narrative WQO for toxicity provides that groundwater shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations producing detrimental physiological responses in human, animal, plant or aquatic life associated with designated beneficial uses.
64. To the extent necessary, narrative WQOs are quantified, on a site-specific basis, as numeric limits for constituents with potential to adversely impacted designated uses. In determining a site-specific numeric limit, the Central Valley Water Board considers relevant published criteria. Quantifying a narrative WQO requires a site-specific evaluation of those constituents that have the potential to impact water quality and beneficial uses. The Basin Plan states that when compliance with a narrative objective is required to protect specific beneficial uses, the Central Valley Water Board will, on a case-by-case basis, adopt numeric limitations to implement the narrative objective. In establishing a specific numeric

interpretation of a narrative WQO, the Basin Plan methodology is to consider any relevant published criteria.

Salt and Nitrate Control Programs

65. The Central Valley Water Board adopted Basin Plan amendments incorporating new programs for addressing ongoing salt and nitrate accumulation in the Central Valley at its 31 May 2018 Board Meeting (Resolution R5-2018-0034). The Basin Plan amendments became effective on 17 January 2020 and were revised by the Central Valley Water Board in 2020 with [Resolution R5-2020-0057](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/r5-2020-0057_res.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/r5-2020-0057_res.pdf).
66. For the Salt Control Program, dischargers that are unable to comply with the stringent salinity requirements will instead need to meet performance-based requirements and participate in a basin-wide effort known as the Prioritization and Optimization Study (P&O Study) to develop a long-term salinity strategy for the Central Valley. The Discharger was issued a Notice to Comply for the Salt Control Program (**CV-SALTS ID 2114**). The Discharger has elected to participate in the P&O Study and is currently in good standing with the program. To maintain existing salt discharges and minimized salinity impacts this Order sets a Performance-Based Effluent Limitation for FDS of 850 mg/L (calculated as an annual average) for the effluent discharged to the LAAs. The Performance-Based Effluent Limitation considers the observed FDS effluent quality since cessation of Cook Plant operations (682 mg/L) and a 25 percent contingency to account for potential future water conservation efforts.
67. The Nitrate Control Program (NCP) is a prioritized program. The Facility is within Groundwater Sub-Basin 5-22.08 (San Joaquin Valley – Kings), a Priority 1 Basin. The Board issued Notices to Comply to dischargers in Priority 1 Basins in May 2020. These notices provided dischargers with a choice to participated in an individual permitting approach (Pathway A) or in a collective permitting approach (Pathway B). Under the collective approach, dischargers jointly form “Management Zones” that fulfill the requirements for the NCP. In response to the Notice to Comply, the Discharger selected Pathway B and joined the Kings Water Alliance.
68. Under the NCP, dischargers that cause or contribute to nitrate pollution in groundwater may apply, individually or collectively, for a limited term “exception” from meeting nitrate limits. Compliance time schedules must be as short as practicable and not exceed 35 years. The Central Valley Water Board will only grant exceptions upon finding that all elements of the Board’s Exceptions Policy are met. For nitrate, the Exceptions Policy dictates that exceptions will not be considered unless an adequate supply of clean, safe, reliable and affordable

drinking water is available for those who have been adversely affected by the non-compliant discharge.

69. Management Zones in Priority 1 Basins were required to submit Management Zone Implementation Plans (MZIPs). The Kings Water Alliance submitted an MZIP on 5 September 2023. The MZIP was deemed complete by the Board's Executive Officer in November 2023. The MZIP contains a proposal for how dischargers within the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone will meet requirements for the Nitrate Control Plan and the Exceptions Policy.
70. To meet the requirements of the Nitrate Control Plan, the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone MZIP includes sector-based Nitrate Reduction Programs, including one for Non-15 (i.e., Groundwater Quality Protection) dischargers, such as the Discharger. The MZIP proposes that the Discharger prepare and submit a facility-specific Nitrate Reduction Work Plan that would characterize the facility's impact on groundwater, quantify the facility's nitrate loading to the Upper Zone of groundwater, estimate the necessary improvements to the facility's discharge to comply with the Management Zone's Groundwater Protection Target(s) and/or other developed compliance metrics, and provide an implementation schedule that will ensure that the facility complies with the NCP.
71. The Kings Water Alliance Management Zone MZIP proposes to meet the requirements of the Exceptions Policy by, among other things, continuing an interim drinking water program that performs outreach to residents potentially affected by nitrate contamination, offers free nitrate well testing, and provides free replacement water to households whose wells are found to exceed the nitrate drinking water standard. The Kings Water Alliance Management Zone MZIP groups Groundwater Quality Protection dischargers into one of three categories. The Facility is identified as a Group 1 Facility (facilities having the greatest potential to impact water quality in the Upper Zone of groundwater).
72. The MZIP will serve as the basis for permit amendments for all dischargers in the Management Zone. At a future Board Meeting, the Board will consider adopting an approval Order for the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone MZIP, where the Board will also make findings as to whether the requirements of the Exception Policy are met by the proposals in the MZIP. In the interim, the Discharger is subject to a Conditional Prohibition that requires that the discharger continue to participate in funding and implementing the drinking water program described in the MZIP.
73. As these strategies are implemented, the Central Valley Water Board may find it necessary to modify the requirements of these WDRs. As such, this Order may be amended or modified to incorporate any newly applicable requirements to ensure that the goals of the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs are met. More

information regarding this regulatory planning process can be found on the [Central Valley Water Board's CV-SALTS website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity).

Special Considerations for High Strength Waste

74. For the purpose of this Order, "high strength waste" is defined as wastewater that contains concentrations of readily degradable organic matter that exceed typical concentrations of domestic sewage. Such wastes contain greater than 500 mg/L BOD. Typical high strength wastewater include septage, some food processing wastes (e.g., slaughterhouses), winery wastes, and rendering plant wastes.
75. Excessive application of high organic strength wastewater to land can create objectionable odors, soil conditions that are harmful to crops, and degradation of underlying groundwater with nitrogen species and metals, as discussed below. Such groundwater degradation can be prevented or minimized through the implementation of best management practices, which include planting crops to take up plant nutrients and maximizing oxidation of BOD₅ to prevent nuisance conditions.
76. Regarding BOD, excessive application can deplete oxygen in the vadose zone and lead to anoxic conditions. At the ground surface, this can result in nuisance odors and fly breeding. When insufficient oxygen is present below the ground surface, anaerobic decay of the matter can create reducing conditions that convert metals that are naturally present in soil as relatively insoluble (oxidized) forms to more soluble reduced forms. This condition can be exacerbated by acidic soils and/or acidic wastewater. If the reducing conditions do not reverse as the percolate travels through the vadose zone, these dissolved metals (primarily iron, manganese, and arsenic) can degrade shallow groundwater quality. Some aquifers contain large vadose (unsaturated) zones with sufficient dissolved oxygen to significantly oxidize or attenuate dissolved metals prior to reaching groundwater, but excessive BOD loading over extended periods may cause degradation and beneficial use impacts associated with these metals.
77. Typically, irrigation with high strength wastewater results in heavy loading on the day of application. It is reasonable to expect some oxidation of BOD at the ground surface, within the evapotranspiration zone and below the root zone within the vadose zone. The maximum BOD loading rate that can be applied to land without creating nuisance conditions or leaching of metals can vary significantly depending on soil conditions and operation of the land application system.
78. *Pollution Abatement in the Fruit and Vegetable Industry*, published by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, cites BOD loading rates in the range of 36 to 600 lbs/ac/day to prevent nuisance, but indicates the loading rates can be

even higher under certain conditions. The studies that supported this report did not evaluate actual or potential groundwater degradation associated with those rates. There are few studies that have attempted to determine maximum BOD loading rates for protection of groundwater quality. Those that have been done are not readily available to the varying soil, groundwater, and climate conditions that are prevalent throughout the Central Valley.

79. The California League of Food Processors' *Manual of Good Practice for Land Application of Food Processing/Rinse Water* (Manual of Good Practice) proposes risk categories associated with particular BOD loading rate ranges as follows:
- a. Risk Category 1: (less than 50 lbs/ac/day; depth to groundwater greater than 5 feet) Indistinguishable from good farming operations with good distribution important.
 - b. Risk Category 2: (less than 100 lbs/ac/day; depth to groundwater greater than 5 feet). Minimal risk of unreasonable groundwater degradation with good distribution more important.
 - c. Risk Category 3: (greater than 100 lbs/ac/day; depth to groundwater greater than 2 feet) Requires detailed planning and good operation with good distribution very important to prevent unreasonable degradation, as well as use of oxygen transfer design equations that consider site-specific application cycles and soil properties and special monitoring.

The Manual of Good Practice recommends allowing a 50 percent increase in the BOD loading rates in cases where sprinkler irrigation is used but recommends that additional safety factors be used for sites with heavy and/or compacted soils.

80. The Manual of Good Practice was revised in February 2024. As part of the 2024 update, the California League of Food Processors conducted a peer-review process by contracting with scientists, professors, and engineers from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and the University of California, Davis. The Manual of Good Practice provides science-based guidance for BOD loading rates that, if fully implemented, are considered a best management practice to prevent groundwater degradation due to reduced metals.
81. Projected average cycle BOD loading rates to the existing LAA range between 0.10-1.0 lbs/ac/day. These WDRs establish a BOD cycle average loading rate of 50 lbs/ac/day to prevent odor conditions from occurring and to prevent groundwater degradation due to reduced metals.

Antidegradation Policy

82. State Water Board Resolution 68-16, Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California (Antidegradation Policy), which is incorporated as part of the Basin Plan, prohibits the Central Valley Water Board from authorizing degradation of “high-quality waters” unless it is shown that such degradation will be consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of California; will not unreasonably affect present and anticipated future beneficial uses; and will not result in water quality less than as prescribed in applicable policies. Resolution 68-16 further requires that any discharge to existing high quality waters be required to meet WDRs that will result in the best practicable treatment or control (BPTC) of the discharge necessary to assure that pollution and/or nuisance will not occur and that the highest quality consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the state will be maintained.
83. The Antidegradation Policy applies when an activity discharges to high-quality waters and will result in some degradation of such high-quality waters. “High-quality waters” are defined as those waters where water quality is more than sufficient to support beneficial uses designated in the Basin Plan. Whether a water is high-quality water is established on a constituent-by-constituent basis, which means that an aquifer can be considered a high-quality water with respect to one constituent, but not for others (State Water Board Order WQ 91-10). If the activity will not result in the degradation of high-quality waters, the Antidegradation Policy does not apply, and the discharger needs to demonstrate that it will use “best efforts” to control the discharge of waste. A “best efforts” approach should consider the effluent quality achieved by other similarly situated dischargers, the good faith efforts of the discharger to limit the discharge of the constituent, and the measures necessary to achieve compliance (State Water Board Order WQ 81-5).
84. For the purposes of this Order, constituents in the effluent with the potential to degrade groundwater quality and/or affect beneficial uses include nitrogen, salts (sodium, chloride, EC, FDS, TDS, etc.), and organics (BOD₅) and metals (arsenic, iron, manganese). Table 11 below provides a comparison of observed average concentrations of these constituents in influent, effluent, onsite monitoring wells, and the Facility source well. Applicable water quality objectives are also provided for comparison. Influent water quality data spans from January 2021 through October 2025, post-Cook Plant effluent water quality data spans from July 2025 through June 2026, source water quality data spans from April 2019 through October 2025, and most data for the monitoring wells spans from December 2017 through October 2024.

Table 11 - Constituents with Potential for Degradation

Constituent (see 1 below)	Average Influent Quality	Effluent Quality	Source Well Water Quality	Upgradient Well Water Quality	Downgradient Well Water Quality	WQOs
BOD ₅	3,060	22	--	--	--	---
EC (µmhos/cm)	1,515	1,557	225	564	1,626	700 (Ag) 900 (sMCL)
Chloride	--	--	12	17	95	250 (sMCL)
Sodium	--	--	24	40	116	690 (Ag)
FDS	624	682	--	--	--	---
TDS	1,607	887	166	400	1,090	500 1,000 1,500
Nitrate as N	2	2	3	13	65	10 (MCL)
Total Nitrogen	265	9	3	12	65	---
Arsenic (µg/L)	--	--	--	<2.0	<2.0	10
Iron (µg/L)	--	--	--	<30	<30	300
Manganese (µg/L)	500	20	--	<10	<10	50

1. Units are in mg/L unless otherwise specified.

2. Recommended lower, upper, and short-term WQOs for TDS.

- a. **Nitrogen.** Source Well quality data indicates concentrations for both total nitrogen and nitrate are below the applicable WQO for nitrate; therefore, underlying groundwater is high quality with respect to nitrogen. Upgradient water quality indicates that nitrate exceeds the WQO. However, average downgradient water quality data shows nitrogen species concentrations more than four times higher than the upgradient well, indicating that historic discharge from the Facility likely contributed to groundwater degradation. However, recent observations indicate that current wastewater treatment produces effluent nitrate concentrations less than Facility source water quality, and total nitrogen less than 10 mg/L. Based on this, the discharge is not expected to impact underlying groundwater. Regardless, the Facility implements measures to prevent further degradation of groundwater quality with respect to nitrogen, including operating the treatment system to facilitate denitrification, applying effluent to the LAA at well below agronomic rates with respect to nitrogen, using lined treatment and storage ponds, and participation in the NCP.

- b. **Salinity (EC, TDS, FDS, sodium, chloride).** Source water and upgradient groundwater concentrations for EC and TDS range from 225 to 564 $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$ and 166 to 400 mg/L, respectively, which are below applicable WQOs. As such, groundwater underlying the Facility is considered high quality with respect to salts. Anticipated EC and TDS concentrations in the effluent are considerably higher than receiving water concentrations; as such, the discharge has the potential to degrade underlying groundwater with respect to salinity.

Average downgradient water quality data shows EC and TDS concentrations more than double the respective concentrations observed in the Facility's upgradient monitoring well, indicating the potential of degradation of underlying groundwater from historical Facility discharges, similar to nitrogen. However, the Facility upgrades have improved the quality of the effluent with respect to EC and TDS. While the upgrades do not appear to have much effect on the FDS concentration of the effluent, this Order establishes a Performance-based Effluent Salinity limit for FDS of 850 mg/L and requires the Discharger to continue to comply with the Salt Control Program requirements (i.e., continue to participate in the P&O Study). These practices as well as expanding the LAA and using lined treatment and storage ponds should reduce the potential degradation of groundwater quality with respect to salts.

- c. **Organics and metals.** Regarding BOD, excessive loading can deplete oxygen in the vadose zone and lead to anoxic conditions. At the ground surface this can result in nuisance odors and fly breeding. Below the ground surface, when insufficient oxygen is present, anaerobic decay of organic matter can create reducing conditions that convert metals naturally present in the soil from relatively insoluble (oxidized) forms into more soluble reduced forms. The monitoring well quality data indicates concentrations for metals are below the applicable WQO for metals; therefore, underlying groundwater is high quality with respect to metals.

Table 11 indicates the BOD₅ effluent concentration is significantly reduced during the treatment process as the average influent water quality has a BOD₅ concentration of 3,060 mg/L, whereas the average effluent water quality since the cessation of the Cook Plant is 20 mg/L. Based on the recent observed effluent water quality, the BOD loading to the LAAs can be managed to be less than 1 lb/acre/day, as discussed in previous findings. Therefore, the Facility's discharge is not expected to degrade groundwater quality with respect to BOD. Nonetheless, this Order establishes a BOD cycle average loading limit of 50 lbs/ac/day, which is consistent with the BOD loading scenario presented in the December RWD, as well as a Risk Category 1 loading rate identified by the Manual of Good Practice.

85. The Discharger implements, or will implement, as required by this Order the following measures, which the Central Valley Water Board has determined constitute BPTC. These measures will minimize the extent of water quality degradation resulting from the Facility's discharges:
- a. Treatment and long-term effluent storage in lined containment structures;
 - b. Advanced wastewater treatment plant utilizing biological nutrient removal and clarification;
 - c. Wastewater application to LAAs must be at agronomic rates;
 - d. Compliance with a BOD cycle average loading limit of 50 lbs/acre/day;
 - e. Compliance with a Performance-Based Effluent Limit for FDS
 - f. Participation in and compliance with the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs
 - g. Preparation and implementation of a Wastewater and Nutrient Management Plan and a Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan.
 - h. Groundwater monitoring for potential impact of the Facility's discharge on underlying groundwater.
86. The discharge authorized by this Order is consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the state. Harris Ranch Beef Company employs more than 400 employees. The Facility is an integral part of Harris Ranch Beef Company's operation and contributes to the economic prosperity of the region by providing a necessary service, employment for the local community, incomes for numerous aligned businesses, and tax revenues for local and county governments.
87. Based on the foregoing, the adoption of this Order is consistent with the State Water Board's Antidegradation Policy.

California Environmental Quality Act

88. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq., Fresno County Planning Commission, as Lead Agency, approved Conditional Use Permit No. 3822 and Initial Study No. 8720 on 30 July 2026 for expansion of the LAA at the Facility (SCH# 2026061277). The Initial Study evaluated expansion the LAA by approximately 40 acres and concluded that the proposed Project would not have a significant effect on the environment and a Negative Declaration was made.

89. The Central Valley Water Board, as a “responsible agency” under CEQA, was consulted in the lead agency’s development of the Initial Study. The discharges and other activities authorized under this Order fall within the scope of the project evaluated in the Initial Study and further CEQA review of the activities authorized by this Order is not necessary. To the extent that this Order authorizes any changes to the Facility’s treatment systems or operations, such authorization is exempt from further CEQA review because those changes constitute minor alterations to an existing facility with minimal or no expansion of the uses contemplated in the 2024 EIR. (See Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301.)

Other Regulatory Considerations

Water Code Section 13149.2

90. These WDRs regulate a facility that may impact a disadvantaged community and nearby tribal communities and includes an alternative compliance path that allows the Discharger time to come into compliance with water quality objectives (i.e., nitrogen and salinity). The Discharger has joined with other dischargers in the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone as part of the NCP to ensure safe drinking water for affected person(s). In addition, the Discharger have selected the Alternative Salinity Permitting Approach for the Salt Control Program, which provides an alternative approach for compliance with salinity limits through implementation of specific requirements (i.e., support facilitation and completion of the Salinity P&O Study). Additionally, the Central Valley Water Board sent a 15 April 2026 letter to disadvantaged and tribal communities potentially impacted by the preparation of this Order, to solicit consultation. The Central Valley Water Board has satisfied the outreach requirements set forth in Water Code section 189.7 by conducting outreach in affected disadvantaged and tribal communities through its notice and comment procedures. Pursuant to Water Code section 13149.2, and as discussed in the following finding, the Central Valley Water Board reviewed readily available information and information raised to the Board by interested persons concerning anticipated water quality impacts in disadvantaged or tribal communities resulting from adoption of these WDRs. The Board also considered environmental justice concerns within the Board’s authority previously raised by interested persons with regard to those impacts.
91. The Central Valley Water Board anticipates that the issuance of these WDRs will result in water quality impacts within the scope of the Board’s authority. Specifically, these WDRs authorize the discharge of wastewater with salinity concentrations that may cause limited degradation or exceedances of applicable WQOs in the near term. The BPTC measures required by this Order, as described above, are intended to minimize and, in the longer term, mitigate the impacts of the Facility’s discharge on nearby disadvantaged communities in Fresno County. Although this Order may result in limited increases to salinity in

groundwater in the near-term, the Salt Control Program is intended to achieve long-term balance and restoration, where possible, of salt-impacted groundwater basins across the region.

Human Right to Water

92. Pursuant to Water Code section 106.3, subdivision (a), it is “the established policy of the state that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.” Although this Order is not subject to Water Code section 106.3, as it does not revise, adopt, or establish a policy, regulation, or grant criterion (see § 106.3, subd. (b)), it nevertheless promotes the policy by requiring discharges to meet MCLs for drinking water (excluding salinity), which are designed to protect human health and ensure that water is safe for domestic use. For salinity, this Order requires compliance with the SCP. Although the Basin Plans’ Exceptions Policy for Salinity, Nitrate, and/or Boron allows participants in these Programs to obtain limited-term exceptions from MCLs for salinity, nitrate, and/or boron, these Programs are consistent with the Human Right to Water Policy because their over-arching management goals and priorities include short-term provision of safe drinking water to impacted users and long-term restoration of impacted groundwater basins and sub-basins where reasonable, feasible, and practicable.

Threat-Complexity Rating

93. For the purposes of California Code of Regulations, title 23 (Title 23), section 2200, the Facility has a threat-complexity rating of 2-B, as defined below:
- a. Threat Category “2” reflects waste discharges that can impair receiving water beneficial uses, cause short-term water quality objective violations, cause secondary drinking water standard violations, and cause nuisances.
 - b. Complexity Category “B” reflects any discharger not included in Category A, with either (1) physical, chemical or biological treatment systems (except for septic systems with subsurface disposal), or (2) any Class II or Class III waste management units.

Title 27 Exemption

94. This Order, which prescribes WDRs for discharges of wastewater to land, is exempt from the prescriptive requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 27 (Title 27), section 20005 et seq. (See Cal. Code Regs., tit. 27, § 20090, subd. (b).),

Stormwater

95. Stormwater that contacts processing surfaces, products, or waste at the Facility is considered wastewater and is included in the wastewater streams sent to the treatment system. Any stormwater which does not come into contact with the processing activities is directed to a separate stormwater retention pond where it either percolates or evaporates. Because all stormwater at the Facility is collected and disposed of onsite, the Discharger is not required, at this time, to obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities, State Water Board Order 2014-0057 DWQ, NPDES General Permit CAS000001 (Industrial General Permit).

Groundwater Well Standards

96. The California Department of Water Resources sets standards for the construction and destruction of groundwater wells (DWR Well Standards), as described in California Well Standards Bulletin 74-90 (June 1991) and Water Well Standards: State of California Bulletin 74-81 (December 1981). These standards, and any more stringent standards adopted by the state or county pursuant to Water Code section 13801, apply to all monitoring wells used to monitor the impacts of wastewater storage or disposal governed by this Order.

Statistical Data Analysis

97. Statistical data analysis methods outlined in the US EPA's Statistical Analysis of Groundwater Monitoring Data at RCRA Facilities, Unified Guidance are appropriate for determining compliance with the Groundwater Limitations of this Order. Depending on the circumstances, other methods may also be appropriate.

Scope of Order

98. This Order is strictly limited in scope to those waste discharges, activities and processes described and expressly authorized herein. This Order is also strictly limited in applicability to those individuals and/or entities specifically designated herein as "Discharger."
99. Pursuant to Water Code section 13264, subdivision (a), the Discharger is prohibited from initiating the discharge of new wastes (i.e., other than those described herein), or making material changes to the character, volume, and timing of waste discharges authorized herein, without filing a new RWD per Water Code section 13260.
100. Failure to file a new RWD before initiating material changes to the character, volume or timing of discharges authorized herein, shall constitute an independent violation of these WDRs.

Procedural Matters

101. All of the above information, as well as the information contained in the attached Information Sheet (incorporated herein), was considered by the Central Valley Water Board in prescribing the WDRs set forth below.
102. The Discharger, interested agencies and other interested persons were notified of the Central Valley Water Board's intent to prescribe the WDRs in this Order, and provided an opportunity to submit their written views and recommendations at a public hearing. (See Wat. Code, § 13167.5.)
103. At a public meeting, the Central Valley Water Board heard and considered all comments pertaining to the discharges regulated under this Order.
104. The Central Valley Water Board will review and revise the WDRs in this Order as necessary.

REQUIREMENTS

It is Hereby Ordered, pursuant to Water Code sections 13263 and 13267: that WDRs Order R5-2017-0021 is rescinded (except for enforcement purposes); and that the Discharger and their agents, employees, and successors shall comply with the following.

A. Standard Provisions

Except as expressly provided herein, the Discharger shall comply with the Standard Provisions and Reporting Requirements dated 1 March 1991 (SPRRs), which are incorporated herein.

B. Discharge Prohibitions

1. Discharge of waste to surface waters or surface water drainage courses is prohibited.
2. Waste classified as "hazardous" (per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, §66261.1 et seq.), shall not be discharged at the Facility under any circumstance.
3. Bypass or overflow the Facility's wastewater treatment and containment structures is prohibited.
4. Waste constituents shall not be discharged or otherwise released from the Facility (including during treatment and storage activities) in a manner that results in:
 - a. Violations of the Groundwater Limitations of this Order; or

- b. Conditions of “nuisance” or “pollution,” as defined per Water Code section 13050.
5. Discharge of wastes other than the Facility’s treated process wastewater at the locations and in the manner described in the Findings and authorized herein is prohibited.
6. Discharge of Cook Plant wastewater to the wastewater treatment system is prohibited.
7. Discharge of process wastewater to the domestic wastewater treatment system is prohibited.
8. Discharge of domestic wastewater to the process wastewater treatment system, lined ponds, and/or LAA is prohibited.
9. Storage of residual solids on areas not equipped with a means to prevent storm water infiltration, or a paved leachate collection system, is prohibited.
10. Discharge of toxic substances into any wastewater treatment system or the LAAs such that biological treatment mechanisms are disrupted is prohibited.

C. Conditional Discharge Prohibitions

1. During Phase I of the Salt Control Program, the Discharger is prohibited from discharging salts at concentrations exceeding the salinity numeric value of 700 $\mu\text{mhos/cm}$ (as a monthly average) unless the Discharger is implementing the Phase I requirements of the Salt Control Programs Alternative Permitting Approach (i.e., full participation in the P&O Study).
2. The Discharger is prohibited from discharging nitrate and other forms of nitrogen speciation (e.g., total inorganic nitrogen and total Kjeldahl nitrogen) unless the Discharger implements the requirements of the Nitrate Control Program Management Zone Approach.

D. Flow Limitations

1. Discharge of wastewater from the Facility shall not exceed the following:
 - a. A monthly average daily flow limit of 0.75 mgd to the treatment system (as monitored at INF-001 in the MRP); nor

- b. A cumulative annual flow limit of 234 million gallons per year to the LAAs (as monitored at EFF-001 in the MRP).

E. Performance Based Salinity Limit

1. To comply with the Salt Control Program, the Discharger has selected the Alternative Salinity Permitting Approach (i.e., Path 2, participation in the P&O Study). Therefore, as discussed in the Findings, these WDRs establish a **performance-based effluent limitation for FDS of 850 mg/L**. As required per the MRP, the Discharger shall evaluate the annual average effluent FDS concentration in the discharge [monitored at EFF-001] with this performance-based salinity limit. If the Facility's discharge exceeds the Performance-Based Salinity Limit, the Discharger shall submit a Salinity Evaluation Report by 1 March of the year following the exceedance of the limit. The Report shall, at a minimum, include the following:
 - a. An evaluation of the Facility's salinity effluent levels. This evaluation should include a discussion of any changes to the source water, any changes to the operations at the Facility (including chemical usage), and any other changes to the Facility that could have contributed to the increased salinity concentrations.
 - b. If additional time is needed to investigate the source(s) of the salinity in the Facility's discharge, the Report shall include a detailed work plan describing what actions the Discharger will conduct (with completion dates) to investigate the source(s) of salinity and report its findings to the Central Valley Water Board. The findings from the investigation shall be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board no later than October 1st of the year following the exceedance of the Performance-Based Salinity Limit.
 - c. The Report shall evaluate the potential impact the increased salinity concentrations could have on underlying groundwater and downgradient users. If additional time is needed for this evaluation, the Report shall propose a submittal date (no later than October 1st of the year following the exceedance of the Performance-Based Salinity Limit).

F. Discharge Specifications

1. Waste discharges shall remain within authorized waste treatment and/or containment structures and LAAs at all times.
2. All treatment systems and equipment shall be operated to optimize discharge quality.

3. Objectionable odors shall not be perceivable beyond the limits of the Facility's property at an intensity that creates or threatens to create nuisance conditions. As a means of ensuring compliance with this specification, the Discharger shall comply with the following:
 - a. The dissolved oxygen (DO) content in the upper one foot of any wastewater treatment or storage pond shall not be less than 1.0 mg/L for three consecutive sampling events. Notwithstanding the DO monitoring frequency specified in the monitoring and reporting program, if the DO in any single pond is below 1.0 mg/L for any single sampling event, the Discharger shall implement daily DO monitoring of that pond until the minimum DO concentration is achieved for at least three consecutive days. If the DO in any single pond is below 1.0 mg/L for three consecutive days, the Discharger shall report the findings to the Central Valley Water Board in writing within 10 days and shall include a specific plan to resolve the low DO results within 30 days of the first date of violation.
4. All conveyance, treatment, storage, and disposal systems shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to prevent inundation or washout due to floods with a 100-year return frequency.
5. All wastewater and/or wastewater solids shall be contained in or stored on an engineered lined surface. The engineered lined surface shall meet a hydraulic conductivity of 1×10^{-6} centimeters per second or less using one of the following:
 - a. A compacted clay liner, with a minimum clay thickness of two feet.
 - b. A Portland cement concrete liner, designed to minimize cracking and infiltration.
 - c. A synthetic liner, consisting of 40 thousandths of an inch (mil) synthetic geomembrane or a 60-mil high-density polyethylene liner installed over a prepared base or a secondary clay or concrete liner.
 - d. An engineered equivalent

The Discharger shall inspect the condition of the engineered liner(s) in accordance with its O&M Plan to ensure the integrity of the liner is maintained and leakage is minimized. Necessary repairs shall be completed within a reasonable timeframe consistent with the severity of the impairment and potential impact to water quality.

6. If leachate in the LCRS for the effluent storage ponds or the anaerobic digester begins to exceed the established Action Leakage Rates (ALRs), the Discharger is required to take actions to inspect and repair the primary liner system, if applicable. Based on the Tier I Pond Report, the ALR for the effluent storage ponds' LCRS is 2.7 gpm. The ALR for the anaerobic digester is 0.7 gpm. To ensure compliance with Discharge Specification F.6, if the ALR is exceeded for any pond liner, the Discharger shall provide a workplan that discusses how the Discharger intends to address the pond liner leak(s) in a timely manner. This workplan shall be submitted within sixty (60) days of identifying the ALR exceedance.
7. The Discharger shall design, construct, operate, and maintain all ponds sufficiently to protect the integrity of containment dams and berms and prevent overtopping and/or structural failure. The operating freeboard in any pond shall never be less than two feet (measured vertically from the lowest possible point of overflow). As a means of management and to discern compliance with this requirement, the Discharger shall install and maintain in each pond a permanent staff gauge with calibration marks that clearly show the water level at design capacity and enable determination of available operational freeboard.
8. Wastewater treatment, storage, and disposal ponds or structures shall have sufficient capacity to accommodate allowable wastewater flow, design seasonal precipitation, and ancillary inflow and infiltration during the winter while ensuring compliance with all requirements of this Order. Design seasonal precipitation shall be based on total annual precipitation using a return period of 100 years, distributed monthly in accordance with historical rainfall patterns.
9. On or about 1 October of each year, the available capacity in the effluent storage ponds shall at least equal the volume necessary to comply with Discharge Specifications E.7 and E.8.
10. All ponds shall be managed to prevent breeding of mosquitoes. Specifically:
 - a. An erosion control program shall be implemented to ensure that small coves and irregularities are not created around the perimeter of the water surface.
 - b. Weeds shall be minimized through control of water depth, harvesting, or herbicides.
 - c. Dead algae, vegetation, and debris shall not accumulate on the water surface.

- d. The Discharger shall consult and coordinate with the local Mosquito Abatement District to minimize the potential for mosquito breeding as needed to supplement the above measures.
- 11. Newly constructed or rehabilitated berms or levees (excluding internal berms that separate ponds or control the flow of water within a pond) shall be designed and constructed under the supervision of a California Registered Civil Engineer.
- 12. The Discharger shall monitor residual solids accumulation in the effluent storage ponds annually and shall periodically remove residual solids as necessary to maintain adequate storage capacity.

G. Land Application Area Specifications

For the purpose of this Order, “land application areas” or “LAA’s” refers to the discharge area described in the Findings and shown in **Attachments A, B, and C**.

- 1. Crops shall be grown on the LAA’s. Crops shall be selected based on nutrient uptake, consumptive use of water, and irrigation requirements to maximize crop uptake.
- 2. Application of waste constituents shall be at reasonable agronomic rates to preclude creation of a nuisance or degradation of groundwater, considering the crop, soil, climate, and irrigation management system. The annual nutritive loading to the LAA’s, including the nutritive value of organic and chemical fertilizers and of the wastewater, shall not exceed the annual crop demand.
- 3. BOD loading to the LAAs, calculated as a cycle average as determined by the methods described in the attached MRP, shall not exceed **50 pounds per acre per day (lbs/acre/day)**.
- 4. The Discharger shall ensure that all water is applied and distributed with reasonable uniformity across each LAA block. The perimeter of the LAAs shall be graded to prevent ponding along public roads or other public areas and prevent runoff or overspray onto adjacent properties not owned or controlled by the Discharger.
- 5. Wastewater from the Facility shall not be applied within:
 - a. 50 feet of a domestic water supply well,
 - b. 50 feet from any surface water or surface water drainage course, or

- c. 25 feet from a property line or public right-of-way unless the irrigation system is designed to prevent runoff or overspray, in which case a minimum setback of 5 feet shall be maintained.
- 6. Hydraulic loading of combined wastewater and supplemental irrigation water shall be managed to:
 - a. Provide water only when water is needed and in amounts consistent with crop needs.
 - b. Maximize crop nutrient uptake.
 - c. Maximize breakdown of organic waste constituents in the root zone; and
 - d. Minimize the percolation of waste constituents below the root zone.

The Central Valley Water Board recognizes that some leaching of salts is necessary to manage salt in the root zone of the crops. Leaching shall be managed to minimize degradation and maintain or reduce, to the extent practicable, concentrations of saline constituents and nitrate (and other forms of nitrogen speciation) in receiving waters.

- 7. The resulting effect of the discharge on soil pH shall not exceed the buffering capacity of the soil profile.
- 8. Land application of wastewater shall be managed to minimize erosion.
- 9. The LAA's shall be managed to prevent breeding of mosquitoes. More specifically:
 - a. All applied irrigation water must infiltrate completely within 48 hours;
 - b. Ditches not serving as wildlife habitat should be maintained free of emergent, marginal, and floating vegetation; and
 - c. Low-pressure and unpressurized pipelines and ditches accessible to mosquitoes shall not be used to store process wastewater.
- 10. Irrigation of the LAAs shall occur only when appropriately trained personnel are on duty.
- 11. The Discharger shall not discharge process wastewater to the LAA's when soils are saturated (e.g., during or immediately after significant precipitation events).

12. The Discharger shall minimize or eliminate any irrigation runoff (i.e., tailwater). Tailwater shall be confined to the LAA, captured and returned to the LAA, or returned to the process wastewater treatment system, and shall not enter any surface water or surface water drainage course.
13. LAAs shall be inspected periodically to determine compliance with the requirements of this Order. If an inspection reveals noncompliance or threat of noncompliance with this Order, the Discharger shall temporarily stop land application use immediately and implement corrective actions to ensure compliance with this Order.

H. Groundwater Limitations

1. Release of waste constituents of the combined or individual waste streams from any treatment, storage, delivery system, or LAA associated with the Facility's discharge shall not cause or contribute to groundwater containing constituent concentrations in excess of the concentrations specified below or natural background groundwater quality, whichever is greater:
 - a. Concentrations that exceed either the Primary or Secondary MCLs established in California Code of Regulations, title 22, sections 64431, 64444, and 64449, excluding salinity provided the Discharger complies with the Salt Control Program (see Conditional Prohibitions C.1).
 - b. Contain taste or odor-producing constituents, toxic substances, or any other constituents in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses, (e.g., by creating off-tastes and/or odor, producing detrimental physiological responses in human, plant, animal, or aquatic life [i.e., toxicity]).

I. Solids Disposal Specifications

1. For the purpose of this Order, residual solids include the solid, semisolid, and liquid organic matter removed during the treatment process.
2. Residual solids shall be removed from screens, treatment systems, vaults, and ponds as needed to ensure optimal operation, prevent nuisance conditions, and maintain adequate storage capacity.
3. Any handling and storage of residual solids shall be temporary and controlled and contained in a manner that minimizes leachate formation and precludes infiltration of waste constituents into soil in a mass or concentration that will violate the groundwater limitations of this Order.

4. If removed from the site, residual solids shall be disposed of in a manner approved by the Executive Officer and consistent with Title 27, division 2. Removal for reuse as animal feed, reuse, biofuel feedstock, or land disposal at facilities (i.e., landfills, composting facilities, soil amendments sites operated in accordance with valid waste discharge requirements issued by a Regional Water Board) will satisfy this specification.
5. Any proposed change in solids used or disposal practice shall be reported in writing to the Executive Officer at least 90 days in advance of the change.

J. Provisions

1. The Discharger shall comply with the separately issued **Monitoring and Reporting Program R5-2026-XXXX** and any revisions thereto as ordered by the Central Valley Water Board or the Executive Officer. The submittal dates of Discharger self-monitoring reports shall be no later than the submittal date specified in the MRP.
2. A copy of this Order (including the Information Sheet, Attachments, and SPRRs) and the MRP shall be kept at the Facilities for reference by operating personnel. Key operating personnel shall be familiar with its contents.
3. The Discharger shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Salt and Nitrate Control Programs adopted in Resolution R5-2018-0034 (as revised per Resolution R5-2020-0057), as part of the Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) initiative, to address ongoing salt and nitrate accumulation in the Central Valley.
4. The Discharger shall participate in the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone Nitrate Control Program activities. This includes collaborating with the Management Zone to collect necessary monitoring data to refine the MZIP preliminary nitrogen load estimate and support development of the Management Zone Groundwater Protection Values and Groundwater Protection Targets.
5. Per the Kings Water Alliance MZIP, the Discharger is identified as a Group 1 Discharger. Upon approval of the MZIP, the Discharger will be required to submit a Nitrate Reduction Work Plan. Details regarding the timeline for submitting the timeline for submitting the Work Plan will be include in the future.
6. By **13 December 2027**, the Discharger shall submit an updated **Wastewater and Nutrient Management Plan** that describes how the

Discharger will manage the LAA and apply wastewater in accordance with these WDRs. At a minimum, the Wastewater and Nutrient Management Plan must include the following:

- a. Procedures for monitoring Facility's operations and discharge.
 - b. Practicable measures to ensure reasonable even application of wastewater. The Plan shall also detail how the Facilities will not discharge wastewater to the LAA when soils are saturated (e.g., during and after significant precipitation events).
 - c. An action plan to deal with objectionable odors and/or nuisance conditions.
 - d. Details on how wastewater and irrigation water will be blended.
 - e. A detailed evaluation of the actual irrigable acres available in all of the LAAs that excludes roads, buildings, ponds and non-planted/irrigated areas.
 - f. A detailed map of the LAA fields to be used each year to facilitate tracking annual wastewater application and nutrient release to the land.
 - g. Management practices that will ensure that wastewater, irrigation water, and fertilizers, compost, or other amendments are applied at agronomic rates to the LAA including but not limited to adjusting wastewater application and spreading based on consideration of soil available nutrients and/or plant tissue sampling results.
7. By **10 March 2027**, the Discharger shall submit an **Updated Groundwater Assessment Work Plan** and time schedule that identifies the methods proposed for assessing the current horizontal and vertical extents of EC, TDS, and nitrogen impacts to groundwater beneath and downgradient of the LAAs. The updated work plan shall include, at a minimum, the following:
- a. A detailed technical approach for re-evaluating groundwater degradation.
 - b. Proposed investigation methods
 - c. A proposed monitoring schedule to evaluate concentration trends and changes in groundwater quality.
 - d. Description(s) of proposed data evaluation procedures

Following approval of the Updated Groundwater Assessment Workplan and in accordance with the approved time schedule but no later than **11 March 2030**, the Discharger shall submit a technical report that describes the horizontal and vertical extent of elevated EC, TDS, and nitrogen degradation/pollution in groundwater beneath and downgradient of the LAAs. The report shall evaluate whether the historic discharge, and/or that authorized by this Order, is causing or contributing to further degradation and propose measures/mitigations to ensure protection of groundwater quality underlying and downgradient of the Facility.

8. By **9 June 2027**, develop and implement a **Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Work Plan** for the proposed discharge. This work plan shall identify salinity control measures that could further reduce the salinity of the Facility's discharge. The Plan shall provide a description of the tasks, cost, and time required to investigate and implement the various elements in the Salinity Control and Minimization Plan. At a minimum, the plan shall include:
 - a. An estimate of all the sources that contribute, or potentially contribute, to the loadings of salinity, in the Facility's proposed wastewater discharge.
 - b. An analysis of the methods/alternatives that could be used to:
 - i. Reduce the sources contributing to salinity in the discharge, and
 - ii. Mitigate or reduce continued impacts to groundwater from the discharge.
 - c. A description of the tasks, costs, and time required to investigate and implement various elements in the Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan
 - d. A plan for monitoring the results of the Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan
9. Within one year following approval of the Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Work Plan, the Discharger shall submit a Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Final Report. At a minimum, the Final Report shall include
 - a. Summary and findings associated with Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Work Plan activities.
 - b. Proposed method(s) of compliance with the Salinity Control Program.

- c. Proposed methods/alternatives for reducing the sources of salinity that discharge into the facility wastewater streams.
 - d. Identification of the recommended source control measures to decrease salinity concentrations at Facility process water components, where necessary.
- 10. The Discharger shall submit the technical reports and work plans required by this Order for consideration by the Executive Officer and incorporate comments the Executive Officer may have in a timely manner, as appropriate. Unless expressly stated otherwise in this Order, the Discharger shall proceed with all work required by the foregoing provisions by the due dates specified.
- 11. In accordance with California Business and Professions Code sections 6735, 7835, and 7835.1, engineering and geologic evaluations and judgments shall be performed by or under the direction of registered professionals competent and proficient in the fields pertinent to the required activities. All technical reports specified herein that contain workplans for investigations and studies, that describe the conduct of investigations and studies, or that contain technical conclusions and recommendations concerning engineering and geology shall be prepared by or under the direction of appropriately qualified professional(s), even if not explicitly stated. Each technical report submitted by the Discharger shall bear the professional's signature and stamp.
- 12. The Discharger shall comply with all conditions of this Order, including timely submittal of technical and monitoring reports. On or before each report due date, the Discharger shall submit the specified document to the Central Valley Water Board or, if appropriate, a written report detailing compliance or noncompliance with the specific schedule date and task. If noncompliance is being reported, then the Discharger shall state the reasons for such noncompliance and provide an estimate of the date when the Discharger will be in compliance. The Discharger shall notify the Central Valley Water Board in writing when it returns to compliance with the time schedule. Violations may result in enforcement action, including Central Valley Water Board or court orders requiring corrective action or imposing civil monetary liability, or in revision or rescission of this Order.
- 13. The Discharger shall at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) that are installed or used by the Discharger to achieve compliance with the conditions of this Order. Proper operation and maintenance also includes adequate laboratory controls and appropriate quality assurance

procedures. This provision requires the operation of back-up or auxiliary facilities or similar systems that are installed by the Discharger when the operation is necessary to achieve compliance with the conditions of this Order.

14. The Discharger shall use the best practicable cost-effective control technique(s) including proper operation and maintenance, to comply with this Order.
15. As described in the SPRRs, the Discharger shall report promptly to the Central Valley Water Board any material change or proposed change in the character, location, or volume of the discharge.
16. In the event that the Discharger reports toxic chemical release data to the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) pursuant to section 313 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (42 U.S.C. section 11023), the Discharger shall also report the same information to the Central Valley Water Board within 15 days of the report to SERC.
17. At least 90 days prior to termination or expiration of any lease, contract, or agreement involving disposal or recycling areas or off-site reuse of effluent, used to justify the capacity authorized herein and ensure compliance with this Order, the Discharger shall notify the Central Valley Water Board in writing of the situation and of what measures have been taken or are being taken to ensure full compliance with this Order.
18. In the event of any change in control or ownership of the Facility or LAAs, the Discharger must notify the succeeding owner or operator of the existence of this Order by letter, a copy of which shall be immediately forwarded to the Central Valley Water Board.
19. To assume operation as Discharger under this Order, the succeeding owner or operator must apply in writing to the Executive Officer requesting transfer of the Order. The request must contain the requesting entity's full legal name, the state of incorporation if a corporation, the name and address and telephone number of the people responsible for contact with the Central Valley Water Board, and a statement. The statement shall comply with the signatory paragraph of SPRRs Standard Provision B.3 and state that the new owner or operator assumes full responsibility for compliance with this Order. Failure to submit the request shall be considered a discharge without requirements, a violation of the Water Code. If approved by the Executive Officer, the transfer request will be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board for its consideration of transferring the ownership of this Order at one of its regularly scheduled meetings. The Discharger shall provide the requisite funding and

personnel to implement the pretreatment program, conduct inspections and sampling and analysis of industrial discharges as needed, and use any available legal means to ensure compliance with the pretreatment program.

20. The Central Valley Water Board will review this Order periodically and will revise requirements when necessary.

ENFORCEMENT

If, in the opinion of the Executive Officer, the Discharger fails to comply with the provisions of this Order, the Executive Officer may refer this matter to the Attorney General for judicial enforcement, may issue a complaint for administrative civil liability, or may take other enforcement actions. Failure to comply with this Order may result in the assessment of Administrative Civil Liability of up to \$10,000 per violation, per day, depending on the violation, pursuant to the Water Code, including sections 13268, 13350 and 13385. The Central Valley Water Board reserves its right to take any enforcement actions authorized by law.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

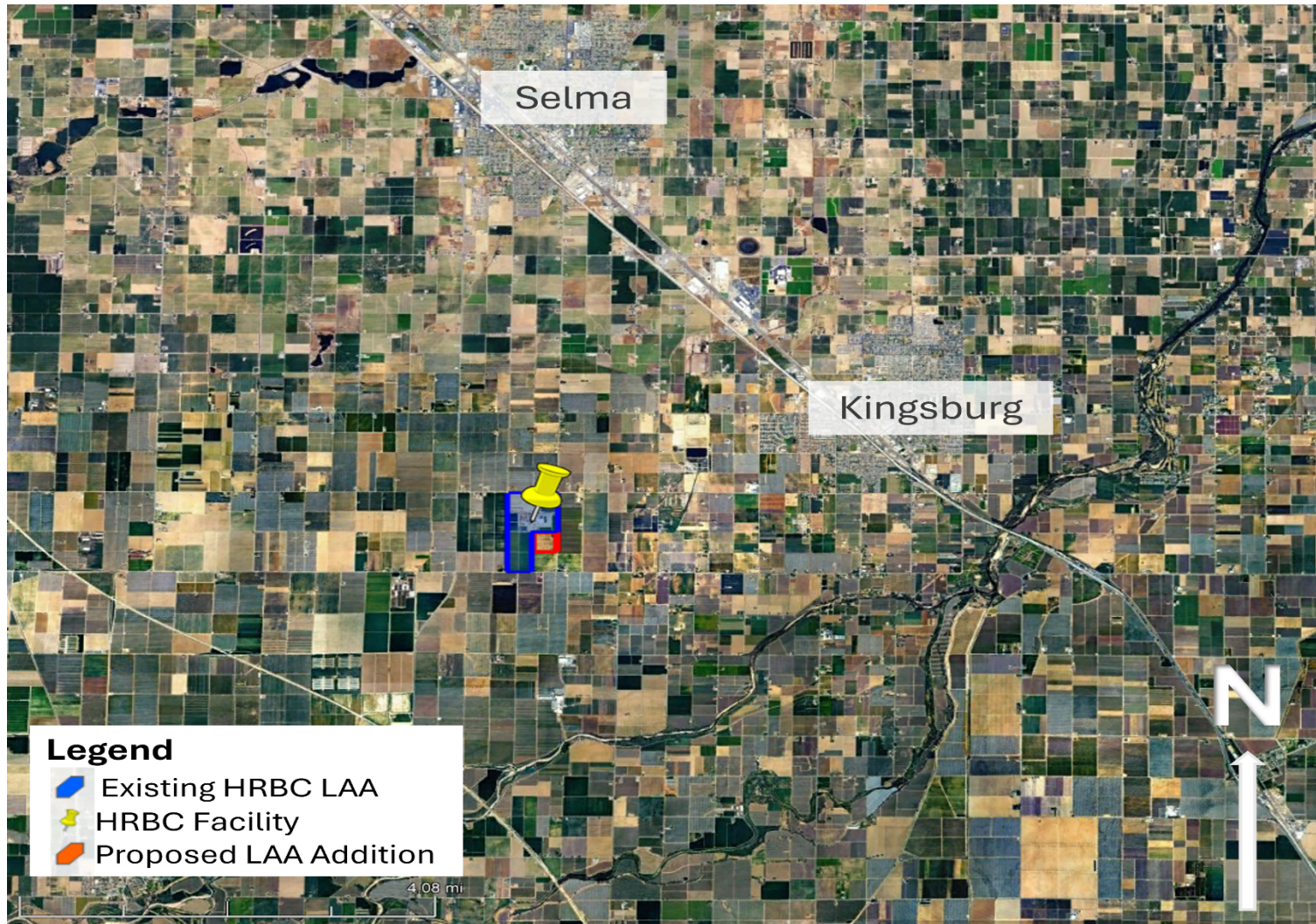
Any person aggrieved by this Central Valley Water Board action may petition the State Water Board for review in accordance with Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 2050 et seq. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m. on the 30th day after the date of this Order; if the 30th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of [the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions](#) are available on the Internet (at the address below) and will be provided upon request.

(http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality)

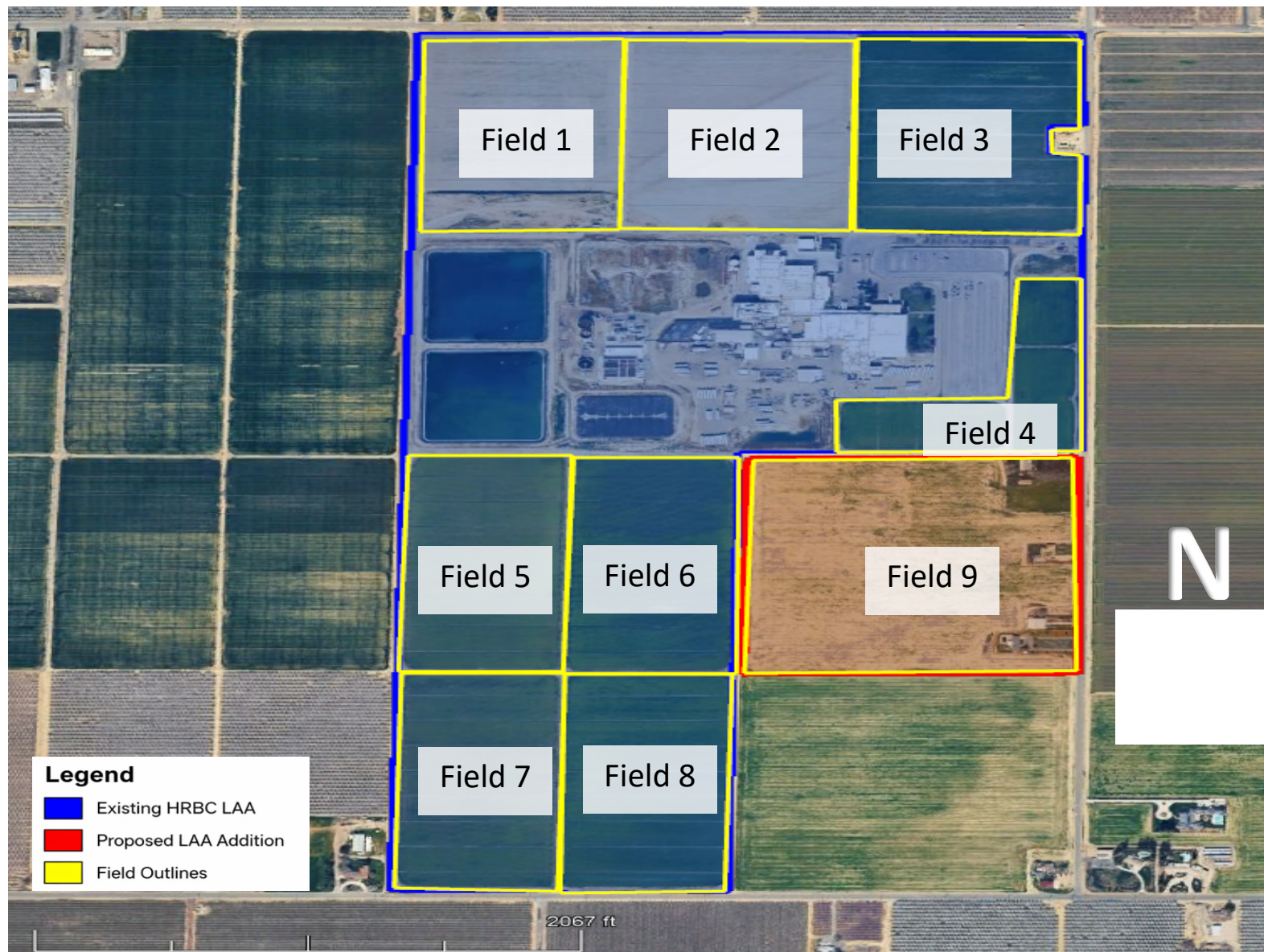
ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A – Site Location Map
ATTACHMENT B – Field ID Map
ATTACHMENT C – Facility Map
ATTACHMENT D – Process Flow Schematic
ATTACHMENT E – Treatment System Site Map
ATTACHMENT F – Potentiometric Surface Map
Standard Provisions & Reporting Requirements
Information Sheet
Monitoring and Reporting Program R5-2026-XXXX

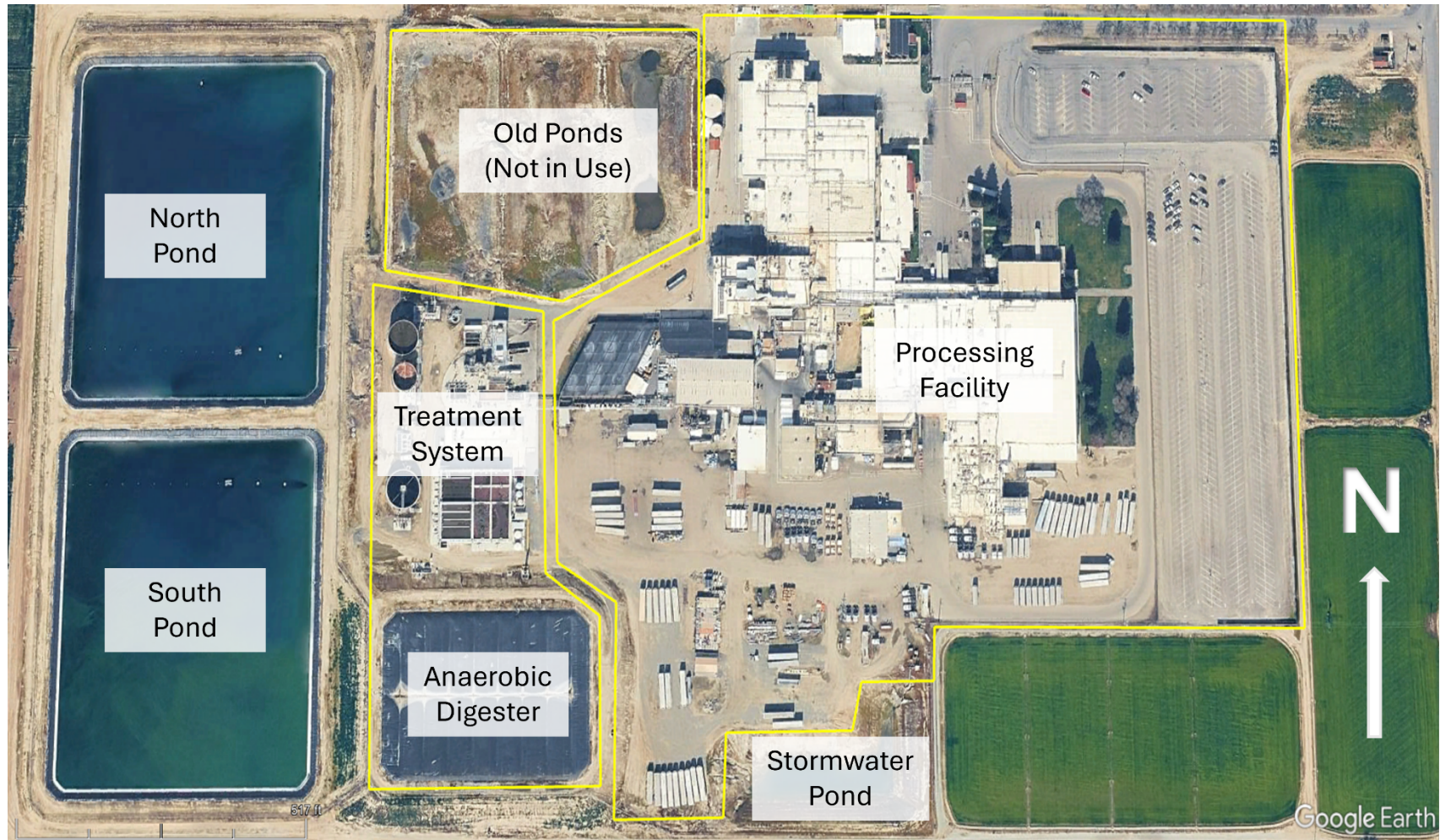
ATTACHMENT A—Site Location Map

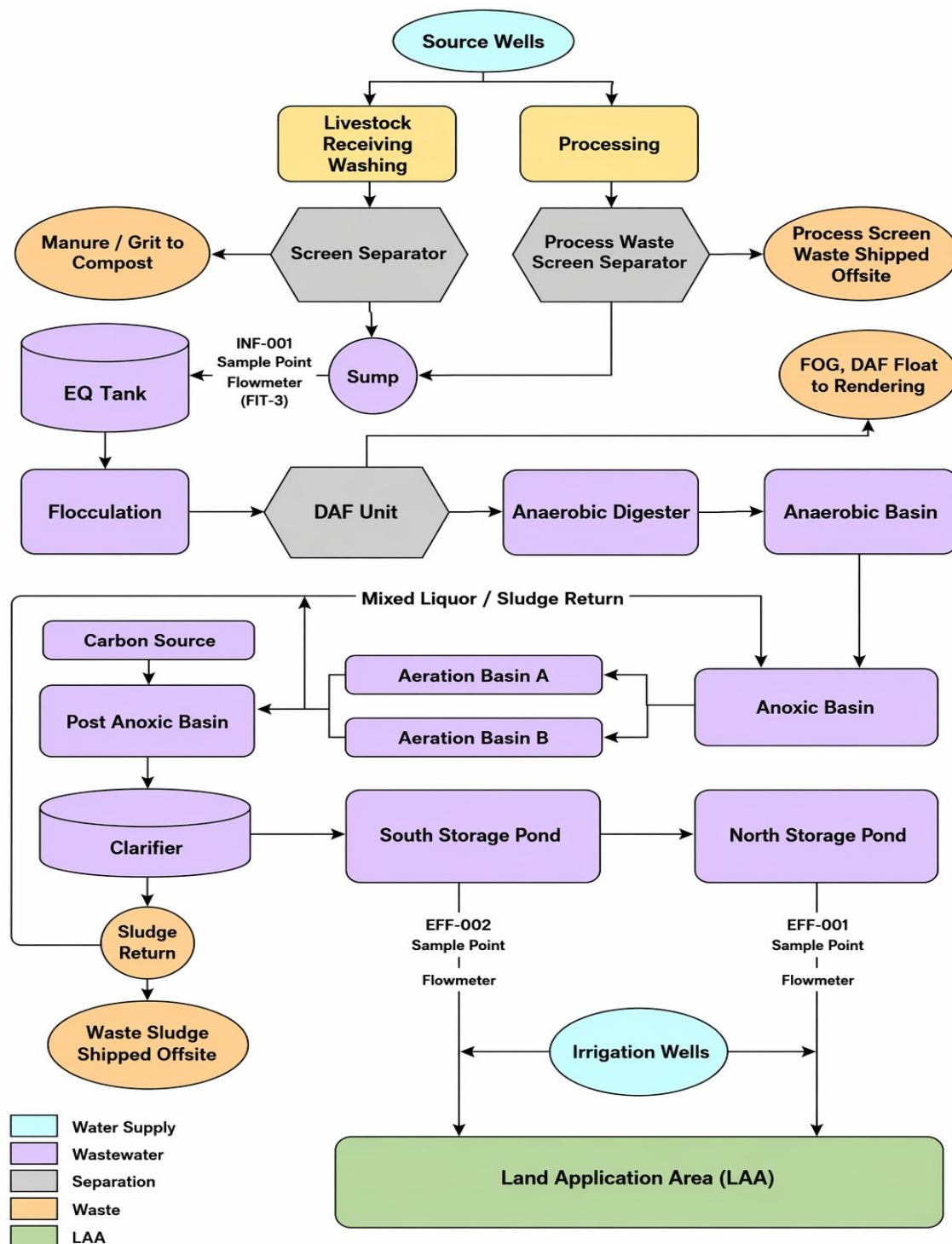


ATTACHMENT B—Field ID Map

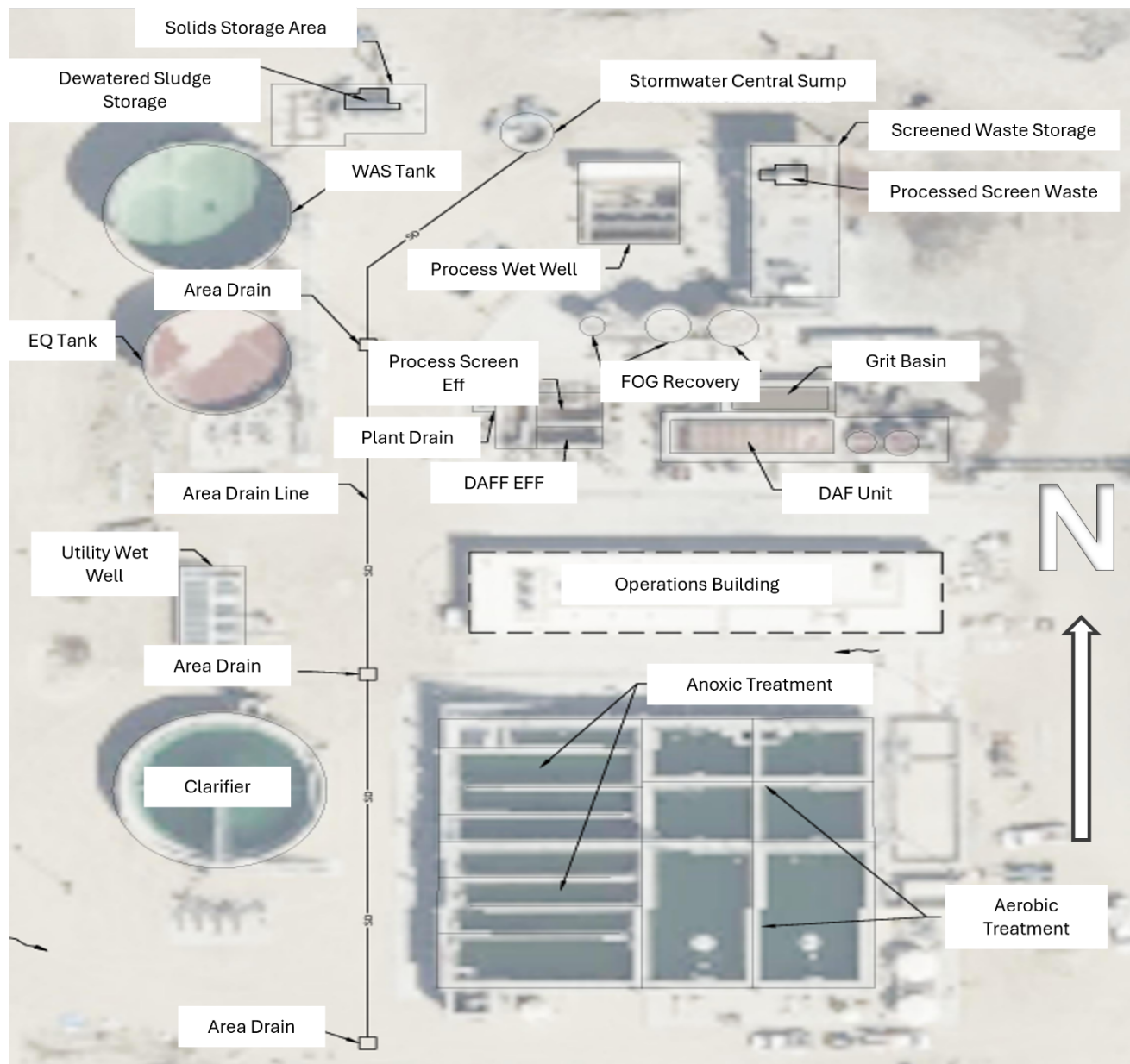


ATTACHMENT C—Facility Map



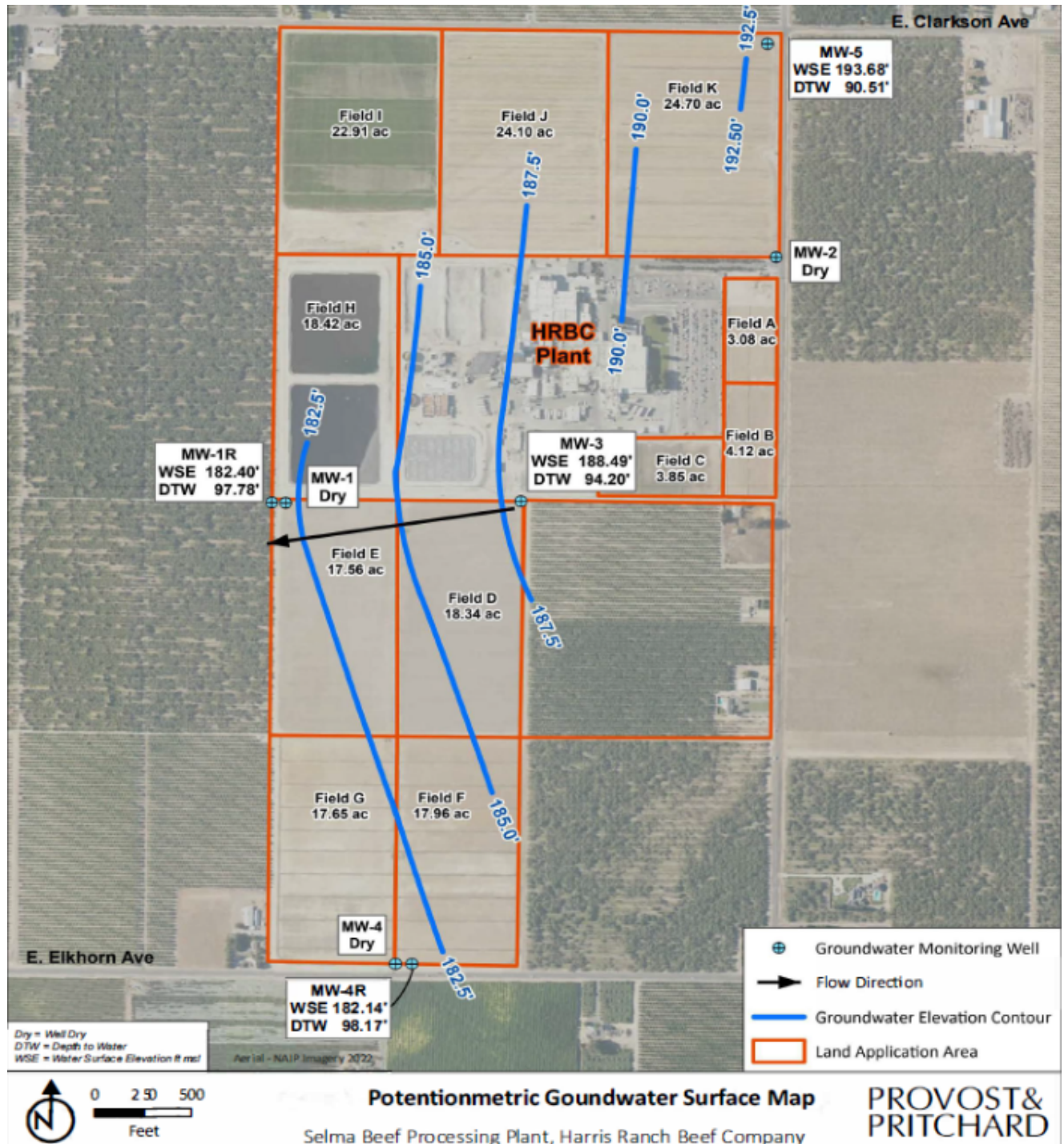


ATTACHMENT E—Treatment System Site Map



Note: The anaerobic digester is not pictured and is out of frame directly south of the anoxic and aerobic treatment areas. See Attachment C for a broader aerial view.

ATTACHMENT F—Potentiometric Surface Map



CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

[Tentative] Waste Discharge Requirements Order R5-2026-XXXX

For

Harris Ranch Beef Company; Tri West Investments, LLC
Selma Beef Processing Facility
Fresno County

INFORMATION SHEET

BACKGROUND

Harris Ranch Beef Company (Harris), a California corporation, owns and operates the Selma Beef Processing Facility (Facility). The Facility is located just south of the community of Selma in Fresno County. The property has a long history of use as a beef processing facility with meat processing activities conducted at the site since the early 1900's. The Facility was first regulated under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order 60-41 adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board). Harris acquired the Facility in 1986 under WDRs Order 78-10. The facility was most recently regulated by WDRs Order R5-2017-0021, which authorized a monthly average discharge flow of 1.0 million gallons per day (mgd) of process wastewater discharge to approximately 186 acres of land application areas (LAA).

WDRs Order R5-2017-0021 was accompanied by Cease and Desist Order R5-2017-0012 (CDO) which amongst other items, required the Discharger to complete improvements to the wastewater treatment facility. The CDO required all improvements be complete by February 2022. The Discharger completed all improvements 2021. Facility improvements included beginning irrigation of a new 100-acre LAA, complete construction of the DAF pretreatment system, anaerobic digester, aerated activated sludge system, biogas reuse system, and effluent storage ponds. The two effluent storage ponds were constructed with a geosynthetic double liner consisting of a 60-mil High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) primary layer over a 60-mil conductive HDPE bottom layer with a 200-mil HDPE geonet material placed between the primary and secondary liners. Each effluent storage pond is equipped with a leachate collection and removal system (LCRS) set below the primary liner and a pan lysimeter set below the secondary liner. The LCRS systems consist of a 590-gallon sump with a submersible pump. From the effluent storage ponds, the effluent is pumped to LAA's. The LAA's are owned by Harris and Tri West Investments, LLC collectively referred to as Discharger.

On 22 May 2025, the Discharger submitted a RWD to add approximately 39 acres of LAA to the existing LAA. The May 2025 RWD included a signed Form 200, and a technical report prepared, signed, and stamped by Nicholas P. Austin, a California Registered Civil Engineer (RCE 96475), and D. Ryan Dodd (CPSS, CPAg, CCA, TSP) a certified soil scientist, agronomist, and crop adviser with Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group (P&P). Staff deemed the May 2025 RWD incomplete and requested the discharger submit a revised RWD. On 19 September 2025, a revised RWD was

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submitted with additional information and described a material change in the wastewater quality due to closure of the Facility's Cook Plant, which contributed to the waste stream. The September 2025 RWD also indicated that the Facility's treatment capacity is 0.75 mgd, which is inconsistent with the previously permitted wastewater flow authorized by WDRs Order R5-2017-0021. Staff found that the September RWD remained incomplete and requested the discharger submit a revised RWD. On 1 December 2025, a revised RWD was submitted with additional information to address the previously incomplete RWDs. Staff deemed the December RWD complete. The December RWD is the technical basis for these WDRs. The December 2025 RWD was signed and stamped by Donald T. Ikemiya (RCE 56630) with P&P.

FACILITY AND DISCHARGE

The Facility is operational approximately 312 days per year and processes about 6,300 cattle per week. Wastewater generated from various processes within the Facility includes the live cattle wash, kill floor, tripe processing, carcass washing, boning room, condensers, boilers, cooling towers, truck washes, sanitation activities and other processing activities. The Facility also included a Cook Plant which contributed to the wastewater stream; however, Cook Plant activities were in June of 2025 removed this portion of the waste stream. Any stormwater which contacts processing surfaces, products, or waste is considered comingled wastewater and is included in the wastewater stream. Stormwater from other impermeable surfaces at the Facility is directed to an onsite retention basin.

The receiving and processing wastewater streams pass through rotary screens to remove processing solids, manure, and grit and then both streams are treated in a dissolved air floatation (DAF) unit for further solids removal before discharge to a central sump. From the central sump, wastewater is sent to a double-lined anaerobic digester, then to a series of aerobic and anoxic concrete cells. Denitrification of the wastewater is facilitated in the final anoxic cell prior to being discharge into a concrete clarifier. The clarified effluent is then sent to two lined storage ponds prior to being used as irrigation water within the 190-acre LAA. All screened solids or sludge removed from the treatment system is hauled offsite for disposal.

Between 2021 and 2024 the average effluent flow was about 182 million gallons per year. The facility is currently permitted to discharge 234 million gallons per year which will remain unchanged upon the adoption of this order. The cessation of the Cook Plant in June of 2025 and operation improvements of the wastewater treatment facility have resulted in improved effluent quality compared to the average effluent quality between 2021 and 2024. A comparison of the historic and anticipated effluent quality is presented in Table 3 of this Order. The Discharger proposes to increase the LAAs by an additional 39 acres for a total of 275 acres of LAA's (190 net farmable acres). The LAA will be cropped with Sudan grass or silage corn in the summer and winter forage in the winter. The effluent will contribute to approximately 131lbs per acre of Nitrogen and the crop removal is expected to be 566 lbs per acre. Wastewater FDS loading is expected

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to be around 6,738 lbs per acre. Although salt uptake by crops is not well studied and is difficult to quantify, the December 2025 RWD indicates that this rotation of crops can remove as much as 3,783 lbs/acre of salts. Based on the anticipated effluent water quality, the cycle average BOD load will be approximately 1 lb/acre/day. The addition of additional acreage and improvement in effluent water quality should result in more favorable mass loading rates for constituents of concern.

GROUNDWATER CONSIDERATIONS

Groundwater conditions are discussed in Findings 42 through 52 of the Order.

ANTIDEGRADATION

Antidegradation Analysis and conclusions are discussed in Findings 82 through 87 of the Order.

DISCHARGE PROHIBITIONS, LIMITATIONS, DISCHARGE SPECIFICATIONS, AND PROVISIONS

The proposed Order prohibits the discharge of waste to surface water and to surface water drainage courses. Effluent discharged to the LAA's shall not exceed a total annual discharge of 234 million gallons (monitored at EFF-001). This Order includes a cycle average BOD loading limit of 50 lbs/acre/day and requires the application of wastewater to be at agronomic rates. The Order also specifies a performance-based annual average effluent limitation for FDS of 850 mg/L. The performance-based effluent limitation is based on the average annual FDS concentrations since cessation of the Cook Plant in June 2025 plus 25 percent to allow some flexibility for water conservation efforts.

This Order also contains the following provisions including:

Provision J.6 requires the Discharger to prepare and implement an updated Wastewater and Nutrient Management Plan.

Provision J.7 requires the Discharger to prepare and implement an updated Groundwater Assessment Work Plan.

Provision J.8 requires the Discharger to prepare and implement a Salinity Evaluation and Minimization Plan.

Groundwater limitations establish that the release of waste constituents from any portion of the Facility shall not cause or contribute to the exceedance of water quality objectives (WQOs) in the receiving water. If the Facility's discharge contains waste at a level greater than a WQO but the groundwater receiving the waste remains below the WQO, the limitation would not be violated. However, if the same discharge contains waste at a level greater than the WQO and causes the receiving water to exceed a WQO, the groundwater limitation would be violated. Similarly, if the same discharge contains waste above the WQO and the receiving water is above the objective, the

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Facility's discharge would be contributing to an exceedance of the WQO and would be violating the receiving water limitation, if the receiving water natural background concentration is less than the WQO.

In the scenario where the level of waste in the Facility's discharge is below the WQO and the receiving water exceeds the WQO, the limitation would not be violated. Where natural background conditions exceed the WQO, compliance would be evaluated considering the established natural background concentration instead of the WQO. Only discharges causing or contributing to the exceedance of the WQO or natural background concentration (if greater than the WQO) in the groundwater would be in violation of the limitation.

The Basin Plan contains the following in Section 3 Water Quality Objectives:

The objectives contained in this plan, and any State or Federally promulgated objectives applicable to the basins covered by the plan, are intended to govern the levels of constituents and characteristics in the main water mass unless otherwise designated...

Any analysis of the above factors to determine exceedances of groundwater limitations would consider this and other guidance from the Basin Plan (e.g., hydrogeologic and background characterization studies, regional groundwater flow and dilution, etc.).

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Section 13267 of the California Water Code authorizes the Central Valley Water Board to require monitoring and technical reports as necessary to investigate the impact of waste discharges on water for the State. Water Code Section 13268 authorizes assessment of civil administrative liability where appropriate. This Order includes influent, effluent, pond, solids, groundwater, and water supply monitoring requirements. This monitoring is necessary to characterize the discharge and evaluate compliance with the requirements and specifications of the Order.

SALT AND NITRATE CONTROL PROGRAMS REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS) initiative, the Central Valley Water Board adopted Basin Plan amendments (Resolution R5-2018-0034) incorporating new programs for addressing ongoing salt and nitrate accumulation in the Central Valley at its 31 May 2018 Board Meeting. These Basin Plan amendments became effective on 17 January 2020 and were subsequently revised by the Central Valley Water Board in 2020 to make targeted revisions required by the State Water Board through adoption of [Resolution R5-2020-0057](#), which became effective 10 November 2021.

For the Salt Control Program, the Discharger (CV-SALTS ID 2114) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) selecting the Alternative Approach (Path 2) electing to participate in the

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Priority and Optimization Study (P&O Study) and is currently in good standing with the program.

For the NCP, dischargers may comply with the new nitrate program either individually (Path A) or collectively with other dischargers (Path B). The Facility is in the Kings Groundwater sub-basin 5-022.08 (a Priority 1 basin). As a Priority 1 basin the Discharger was issued a Notice to Comply for the Nitrate Control Program on 29 May 2022. The Discharger selected Path B and is listed as a participating member currently in good standing with the Kings Water Alliance Management Zone.

The CV-SALTS initiative will result in regulatory changes that will be implemented through conditional prohibitions and modifications to many WDRs regionwide, including the WDRs that regulate discharges from the Facility. More [information regarding the CV-SALTS regulatory planning process](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity/) can be found at the following link:
https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/salinity/

REOPENER

The conditions of discharge in the Order were developed based on currently available technical information and applicable water quality laws, regulations, policies, and plans, and are intended to assure conformance with them. The Order sets limitations based on the information provided thus far. If applicable laws and regulations change, or once new information is obtained that will change the overall discharge and its potential to impact groundwater, it may be appropriate to reopen the Order.

LEGAL EFFECT OF RESCISSION OF PRIOR WDRS OR ORDERS ON EXISTING VIOLATIONS

The Central Valley Water Board's rescission of prior waste discharge requirements and/or monitoring and reporting orders does not extinguish any violations that may have occurred during the time those waste discharge requirements or orders were in effect. The Central Valley Water Board reserves the right to take enforcement actions to address violations of prior prohibitions, limitations, specifications, requirements, or provisions of rescinded waste discharge requirements or orders as allowed by law.