



## Overview

The Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability ([CV-SALTS](#)) initiative is a stakeholder driven effort to develop an environmentally and economically sustainable Salt and Nitrate Management Plan (SNMP) for the entire Central Valley. The SNMP addresses legacy and ongoing salt and nitrate accumulation that threaten the region's water supplies. CV-SALTS is structured with an Executive Committee made up of a broad coalition of representatives from agriculture, cities, industry, state and federal regulatory agencies as well as Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities advocates. The overall facilitation and funding for the initiative is provided by the Central Valley Salinity Coalition, a non-profit stakeholder committee comprised primarily of the regulated stakeholders. Seed money for the initiative (\$5-million) was provided through the State Clean-up and Abatement Account with stakeholders providing over \$20-million in direct match, in-kind services, data compilation and pilot studies.

The SNMP under development builds on a range of water quality management policies and mechanisms already in existence; proposes additional policies, and tools needed to provide the Central Valley Water Board with flexibility to address complex issues in the diverse region. The SNMP provides the over-arching framework, including default identification of current ambient water quality and available assimilative capacity in Central Valley groundwater basins, and provides for local flexibility and encourages local-scale management plans to be developed and implemented by local and/or regional entities as local stakeholders deem appropriate.

Although broader in overall scope, the SNMP is also developed to meet requirements set forth in the State Recycled Water Policy, adopted in 2009 by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). The CV-SALTS Program is a subset of the Basin Planning program and utilizes 5.2-staff funded by Waste Discharger Permit fees who are located in both the Rancho Cordova and Fresno Water Board offices.

## Goals

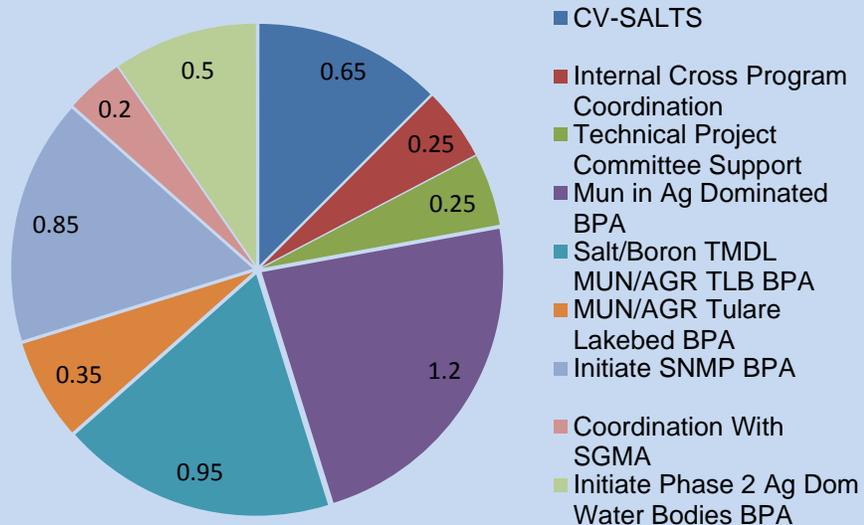
The Central Valley SNMP is built on the following management goals:

1. Ensure a Safe Drinking Water Supply;
2. Achieve Balanced Salt and Nitrate Loading; and
3. Implement Managed Aquifer Restoration

These goals recognize the need to focus limited resources first on health risks, then on balancing loading followed by restoring impacted water. Activities (both regulated and unregulated) leading to salt and nitrate balance are ongoing now (e.g., nutrient management plans, improved irrigation practices; real-time management of discharges, pilot studies, etc.). Restoration will be time and resource intensive. The SNMP provides the structure to prioritize safe drinking water, the flexibility to manage at a watershed scale and the time to move to sustainability while allowing the economic engine of the Central Valley to continue as drinking water is protected and salt moved out of areas where it impacts beneficial uses.

## PY Distribution

A total of 5.2 Person Years (PYs) is dedicated to planning projects directly linked to CV-SALTS.



## Priorities/Performance Targets: FY2016-2017

The Central Valley SNMP is scheduled to be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board in December 2016, after which it will be developed into a Basin Plan Amendment. The SNMP is supported by both archetype/prototype studies (“proofs of concept” in the form of Basin Plan Amendments) that provide examples and/or guidelines for consideration when implementing various elements of the SNMP and by technical studies that provide the basis for SNMP recommendations for the short and long term management of salt and nitrate ([SSALTS](#) and [NIMS](#), respectively). The SNMP also includes several policy recommendations to facilitate implementation.

CV-SALTS priority activities for FY16/17 include:

- Complete Policies being developed for Board consideration
  - Nitrate Management and Permitting Strategy
  - Salt Management and Permitting Strategy
  - AGR Beneficial Use Protection Regarding Salinity in Groundwater Policy
  - Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level Policy
  - Offsets Policy
  - Variance/Exceptions Policy
  - Management Zone Policy
  - Conservation and Drought Policy

(These policies will provide new authorities to the Board. The existing authorities provided in the Basin Plans will remain and be available to the Board.)

- Complete CEQA/Economic Review and Anti-degradation Analysis
- Complete foundational Basin Plan Amendments 2017-18
  - [Salt/Boron Objectives for the Lower San Joaquin River](#)
  - [MUN Evaluation Process for Ag Dominated Water Bodies](#)
  - [Dedesignation of MUN/AGR in a Portion of the Tulare Lake GW Basin](#)
- Initiate SNMP Basin Plan Amendment