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Central Valley Water Board Identifies Land Owners Who Are Not Participating in Regulatory Program

SACRAMENTO -- The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is identifying and requiring compliance from owners of irrigated lands who are not participating in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. These landowners are required by law to get regulatory coverage for any agricultural waste (such as sediments, nutrients, salts, and pesticide residues) which leaves their property and flows into Central Valley lakes, rivers, and streams.

Owners of irrigated lands are identified through public information, including pesticide use reports, land use data, and county assessor roles. Publicly available aerial photography is used to confirm whether or not parcels qualify as irrigated farm land

On July 29, the Central Valley Water Board's Executive Officer issued sixteen Orders to landowners in Sacramento, Solano, and Butte Counties, requiring each of them to submit a technical report describing their agricultural operations, and explaining why they are not participating in the program. Those landowners own an estimated 3,000 irrigated acres. So far in 2008, 68 Orders have been issued; and 24 Notices of Violation have subsequently been issued for failure to respond to the Orders. Failure to respond can result in fines of up to \$1,000 per day.

More than 28,000 growers who discharge to surface waters are participating in the Central Valley Water Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. These growers have joined local water quality coalitions that work cooperatively with the Central Valley Water Board to aid members in resolving water quality problems. The Central Valley Water Board will continue to identify and contact owners of irrigated land who are not participating in the program.

For information on the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program please visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/