

Superior Accomplishment Award

April 2025

EMPLOYEE: Lisa Wilson

UNIT: Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, Assessment, and Planning

TITLE: Engineering Geologist

SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Jennifer LaBay, Senior Environmental Scientist



The Federal Clean Water Act requires California to report on the quality of its surface waterbodies every two years. To meet this requirement, California develops the Integrated Report. To develop the Integrated Report, data from California surface waters are evaluated and, if appropriate, assessed to determine if they contain pollutants at levels that exceed water quality standards. The Central Valley Region covers 40 percent of the state and includes over 1,200 waterbody segments requiring assessment. Historically, the Central Valley Region assessed the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta using subareas, which grouped individual waterbodies together.

Lisa Wilson, an Engineering Geologist in the Nonpoint Source Planning and Assessment Unit, has worked on the Integrated Report since December 2018. After learning the complexities of the Integrated Report, Lisa recommended an approach for the Delta to better reflect water quality

conditions that align with the assessment approach used for the remainder of the region and state. This new approach began the process of remapping and reassessing the Delta for the Integrated Report.

Lisa created a plan for this initiative, which was divided into two phases. The first phase focused on dividing waterbody segments at the Delta boundary, leading to 14 updated segments that better reflect the spatial and temporal characteristics of the waterbody as well as the site-specific objectives. This process involved reassociating water quality stations, revising over 1,000 lines of evidence, making new decisions for the Integrated Report, and retiring several waterbody segments.

The second phase of the project involved extracting data, by location, from the seven Delta Subareas and moving that data to the corresponding waterbody segment. The process included station reassociation, over 500 revised lines of evidence, new Integrated Report decisions, and the retirement of the seven Delta subareas.

Lisa took the lead on the entire initiative, collaborating with the State Water Board's Division of Water Quality to outline the necessary steps for project completion, and carrying out most of the work herself. She closely monitored all aspects of the project, ensured that staff stayed on track with their assignments, and provided regular updates to management as needed.

This project took about four years to complete, primarily due to its complexity and the fact that Lisa was also concurrently managing her regular Integrated Report responsibilities.

This project has made the Integrated Report Delta assessment process more transparent for the Board and the public. The project itself would not have been feasible without Lisa's knowledge, expertise, and willingness to go above and beyond. As such, she is worthy of the Superior Accomplishment award, and we are extremely fortunate to have her working for the Central Valley Water Board.