



July 17, 2012

VIA E-MAIL

Attn: Adam Laputz
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114
awlaputz@waterboards.ca.gov

Re: Comments Regarding the Tentative WDRs for the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed

Dear Mr. Laputz and Members of the Board:

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board recently released for public review the tentative Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Growers Within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed That Are Members of the Third Party Group (“Tentative Eastside Order”). Paramount Land Company, LLC and Paramount Pomegranate Orchards, LLC (“Paramount”) own New Columbia Ranch, located along the northeastern border of the San Joaquin River, just upstream from the Mendota Pool and downstream from the historic Whitehouse Gauging Station. Paramount Farming Company, as Paramount’s representative, submits the below comments on the Tentative Eastside Order.

To date, Paramount has met the requirements of the existing Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (“ILRP”) by enrolling all of its New Columbia Ranch irrigated acreage with the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition (“Westside Coalition”). A significant portion of the New Columbia Ranch is within the Columbia Canal Company service area, which is a member of the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (“Exchange Contractor”). All Exchange Contractor irrigated acreage is enrolled through the Westside Coalition as well. Paramount has found significant benefits in having the whole of its New Columbia Ranch enrolled in the Westside Coalition for purposes of regulatory compliance and seeks to ensure the all ILRP compliance programs, including the Eastside Order, developed by the Central Valley Water Board allow for compliance by growers with the least amount of administrative burden possible. As such, Paramount requests revised language in the Tentative Eastside Order that excludes irrigated acreage that previously received coverage under the Westside Coalition and will continue to be covered under the Westside Coalition or the third-party representative designated for the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Order or that enrolls for coverage under the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Order. Section 3, paragraph 2 of the Tentative Eastside Order reads:

“There are some locations within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed where it may be more effective for owners and operators of irrigated lands that are not ‘Members’ to enroll under an irrigated lands regulatory program (ILRP) Order that recognizes a different third-party

representative. In these locations, the boundaries of the third-party area overlap with boundaries of a third-party area recognized by a different ILRP Order. Growers are only required to obtain coverage under one ILRP order.”

To clarify this issue, we recommend that the second paragraph of Section 3 be revised as follows:

“There are some locations within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed where it may be more effective for owners and operators of irrigated lands that are not ‘Members,’ to enroll under an irrigated lands regulatory program (ILRP) Order that recognizes a different third-party representative and for owners and operators of irrigated lands that are currently enrolled and receiving program coverage under the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition to remain covered under the ILRP Order that governs the Westside San Joaquin River Watershed. Growers are only required to obtain coverage under one ILRP Order. Irrigated acreage covered by enrollment with a third-party representative under another ILRP Order will be excluded from this Order.”

The ILRP should be a well thought-out, meaningful endeavor that regulates those actually discharging, not that merely creates further regulation and cost. Any ILRP should properly evaluate the cost and benefits of the reporting and monitoring requirements and provide measurable goals for each level of regulation that if obtained, results in a defined, decreased level of future reporting and monitoring. Such goals provide an incentive for action and properly align program costs and benefits. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board’s development and implementation of the ILRP falls short and has been a piecemeal effort to meet deadlines that has failed to engage in a meaningful cost-benefit analysis and has lacked a collaborative stakeholder process.

Additionally, Paramount hereby joins in and incorporates those comments submitted by the Southern San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition, the Westside Coalition and the Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority.

Thank you for taking these comments into consideration. We would be happy to discuss further at your convenience.

Sincerely,



William D. Phillimore
Executive Vice President

cc: State Water Resources Control Board