

APPENDIX L

CV-SALTS Process and Public Participation

CV-SALTS (Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-term Sustainability) is a collaborative stakeholder driven effort that was initiated in 2006 to develop a vision and plan for managing salts and nitrates throughout the Central Valley Region in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.¹ CV-SALTS includes a broad coalition of representatives from agriculture, cities, industry, state and federal regulatory agencies, Environmental Justice advocates on behalf of disadvantaged communities and populations, and the general public.

CV- SALTS includes support from the Central Valley Salinity Coalition (CVSC), a non-profit organization formed in July 2008 to organize, facilitate and fund efforts needed for the efficient management of salinity in the Central Valley. The CVSC entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the State Water Board and the Central Valley Water Board to formalize their commitment to CV-SALTS. The CVSC is a California member benefit 501 C-6 Corporation (association). **Table L-1** provides the membership of the CVSC as of December 2016.

Table L-1. Central Valley Salinity Coalition Membership (December 2016)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• California Association of Sanitation Districts• California Cotton Growers and Ginners• California League of Food Processors• California Resources Corporation• California Rice Commission• Central Valley Clean Water Association• City of Davis• City of Fresno• City of Manteca• City of Modesto• City of Stockton• City of Tracy• City of Vacaville• Dairy CARES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition• Northern California Water Association• Pacific Water Quality Association• Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District• San Joaquin Tributaries Authority• San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority• South San Joaquin Valley Water Quality Coalition• Stockton East Water District• Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District• Tulare Lake Drainage District• Valley Water Management Company• Western Plant Health Association• Westlands Water District• Wine Institute

CV-SALTS has been funded through a combination of State Water Board Cleanup & Abatement (CAA) funds and matching funds from the CVSC. The first allocation of CAA funds by the State Water Board was for \$1,200,000 for the multi-year development of a multi-component basin wide SNMP. The State Water Board authorized an additional \$3,800,000 in 2010 for continued work on the developing SNMP. The provided funding was matched with financial and in-kind contributions by CV-SALTS stakeholders as documented through annual progress reports to the State Water Board.

The sections below describe key elements of the CV-SALTS organizational structure and stakeholder process. Since its inception CV-SALTS has maintained an active website (www.cvsalinity.org), which serves as a repository for CV-SALTS information ranging from meeting agendas and notes to technical work products and related technical information.

Organization Structure

The CV-SALTS organizational structure consists of the Leadership Team, the Executive Committee, the CVSC, and several subcommittees that provide specific technical support (**Figure L-1**). The **Leadership Team** was critical in the initiation of the CV-SALTS process and consisted of 83 members including State Departments, Federal Agencies, Cities, Counties and Associations related to water and agriculture. In the formation process and at various times the leadership group met and included the US EPA, US Bureau of Reclamation, US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Geological Survey and US Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal partners as well as the State Departments of Water Resources, Food and Agriculture, Public Health and the State and Regional Water Boards. A broad group of stakeholders and public representatives were also represented at the initiation of CV-SALTS. Several of the various entities represented in the Leadership Team, became part of the CV-SALTS Executive Committee.

The **Executive Committee** is made up of 30 members: 6 committee chairs, 6 representing non-governmental organizations, federal and state agencies and 18 members of the CVSC. The Executive Committee provides oversight of all other committees in CV-SALTS and approves all final decisions and actions. The Executive Committee has met approximately twice monthly since it was developed. All meetings were open to the public and non-members were invited to participate and be involved in the discussions. With over **140** meetings, these meetings represented thousands of hours of stakeholder and member participation in the monthly meetings:

- *Executive Committee Policy Meetings:* The committee has held regular face-to-face, public meetings in Sacramento, California where the salt and nitrate policy and management-related elements of the SNMP were discussed and developed collaboratively if not always by consensus.
- *Executive Committee Administration Meetings:* The committee has held regular public teleconferences to discuss CV-SALTS process-related items, including selection of contractors to complete work required to support development of the SNMP, management of authorized contracts, evaluation of progress of ongoing project work, and implementation of committee procedures.

Figure L-1. CV-SALTS Organizational Structure



All Executive Committee meetings have been held in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. All meeting agendas, meeting notes and supporting materials are available to CV-SALTS participants and the public at: <https://www.cvsalinity.org/docs/agendas-and-notes.html>. Executive Committee meetings have been broadly attended by representatives of the following groups:

- Ag Coalitions and Ag Industry Representatives
- Ag Commodity Groups
- Dairy Cares
- Environmental Justice Community
- Federal Agencies (USBR)
- Food Processor Industry
- Municipalities
 - City of Davis
 - City of Fresno
 - City of Stockton
 - City of Tracy
 - City of Vacaville
- Oil and Gas Industry
- POTW Industry
- Sanitation Districts
- State Agencies (CDFA, CVWB, DWR and SWRCB)
- Water Districts
- Water Purveyors

The Executive Committee is supported by a variety of subcommittees that provide key support where needed to facilitate the development and implementation of the SNMP. All subcommittee meetings are held in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act; meeting agendas, notes and supporting materials are available at www.cvsalinity.org. Key CV-

SALTS subcommittees include:

- The **Technical Advisory Committee** (TAC) is an all-volunteer committee comprised of approximately 60 to 70 stakeholders with varying interests and expertise in the technical issues associated with salt and nitrate management in the Central Valley, including representatives from the University of California and other educational institutions. The TAC meets periodically via teleconference or during face-to-face meetings in the Sacramento area to provide oversight and input on specific CV-SALTS technical issues and ongoing studies. The TAC has conducted over **50** meetings.
- The **Public Education and Outreach Committee** (PEOC), comprised of approximately 26 stakeholders, is responsible for preparing materials to facilitate the understanding of salt and nitrate concerns in the Central Valley and implementation of the Salt and Nitrate Control Program. The committee has been developing materials to educate dischargers and the public throughout the Central Valley Region. The PEOC has held over **45** meetings with stakeholder representatives bringing developed material to their constituents in local meetings.
- The **Lower San Joaquin River Committee** (LSJRC) was instrumental in the development of proposed water salinity quality objectives in Reach 83 of the Lower San Joaquin River (mouth of the Merced River to Vernalis). The outcome of this effort was a Basin Plan amendment that was adopted by the Central Valley Water Board in June 2017 (Resolution R5-2017-0088) and approved by the State Water Board in January 2018 (Resolution No. 2018-0002). The amendment identified a methodology to determine appropriate salinity levels to protect irrigated agriculture and also set interim salinity limits for extended dry period. The LSJRC conducted over **66** meetings with representatives from both the CV-SALTS Executive Committee as well as local growers, wetland managers, water agencies and reclamation districts.
- **Project Committees** are established on an ad hoc basis to provide stakeholder review and oversight on authorized technical projects. These committees interact closely with the contractors working on projects to ensure that the deliverables support the technical needs of CV-SALTS. Project Committees oversaw the White Papers developed on salinity impacts to beneficial uses as well as the studies on salt and nitrate management measures. Various Project Committees conducted over **52** meetings.

Completion of Technical Studies and Regulatory Evaluations

From its establishment through 2016, CV-SALTS completed numerous technical studies and regulatory evaluations to provide the foundation for the SNMP. This work covered a range of technical and regulatory needs including:

- *Conceptual Model Development* - Model development and related studies provided a technical understanding of salt, nitrate and water conditions in Central Valley groundwater basins/subbasins.
- *Data Development* - GIS and water quality databases established for use in various projects to support policy development.
- *Beneficial Use Designation Studies* - Development of archetypes for designation

or de- designation of MUN and AGR uses in the Central Valley Region.

- *Water Quality Objective Reviews* - Evaluation of the basis for establishment of water quality objectives for salinity to protect AGR, MUN and Aquatic Life Uses.
- *Implementation Planning* - Projects to develop and evaluate management strategies for salinity and nitrate in the Central Valley.

Deliverables from projects within each of the above categories may be found at: <http://www.cvsalinity.org/index.php/committees/technical-advisory.html>.

CEQA Scoping Meetings

To facilitate potential changes to the Basin Plans that could result from the development of the Central Valley SNMP and future Salt and Nitrate Control Program, the Central Valley Water Board staff held four CEQA scoping sessions in October 2013 in Fresno, Modesto, Colusa and Rancho Cordova. These scoping sessions identified likely alternatives under consideration by CV-SALTS for the long-term management of salt and nitrate in the Central Valley.

Annual Progress Reports and Public Workshops

Throughout the process of developing a salt and nitrate management strategy, CV-SALTS provided both annual progress updates to the State Water Board at public hearing as well as annual Central Valley Water Board workshops to discuss major policy issues. Updates to the State Water Board were presented in December 2011, December 2012, January 2014, January 2015, and February 2016. Public workshops were conducted by the Central Valley Water Board in June 2012, July 2013, December 2013, April 2015, June 2016, March 2017 and January 2018.

Salt and Nitrate Management Plan Development

As technical studies and regulatory evaluations were completed, the CV-SALTS Executive Committee began drafting proposed salt and nitrate management strategies and policies to support the strategies. These drafts provided the basis for several of the workshops noted above. The following workshops focused on draft proposals:

- *June 2016 Central Valley Water Board Workshop* - In May 2016, the first drafts of Strategy and Policy Documents and an Executive Summary of the SNMP were released for informal public review.
- *September 2016 Draft of the SNMP* - The first draft of the proposed Central Valley SNMP was released for review on September 12, 2016.
- *November 2016 Revised Draft of the SNMP* - A Revised Draft SNMP was released for review on November 3, 2016.
- *December 2016 Final SNMP for Central Valley Water Board Consideration* - This document and all its attachments and links was released to the public for review in January 2017.
- *March 2017 Central Valley Water Board Workshop* - The Final Central Valley-wide

SNMP was discussed. The Central Valley Water Board directed staff to utilize the SNMP as appropriate and develop Basin Plan Amendments for a Salt and Nitrate Control Program. The final SNMP is available at:

<http://www.cvsalinity.org/index.php/docs/central-valley-snmp/final-snmp.html>

Continuing Outreach

Central Valley Water Board staff has continued to work through CV-SALTS during the development of the proposed Salt and Nitrate Management Program, both through the Executive Committee and also through small stakeholder workgroups to develop the proposed Salt Control Program, Nitrate Control Program and supporting policies. The CV-SALTS Public Education and Outreach Committee (PEOC) has also increased activities to insure that stakeholder groups are aware of the Central Valley SNMP completed December 2016, and potential future salt and nitrate regulations. The PEOC developed a Draft Communications Plan in 2017 which can be found here:

<https://www.cvsalinity.org/docs/committee-document/public-education-and-outreach-docs/3686-cv-salts-draft-comm-plan-1-8-17/file.html>.

The PEOC has developed several SNMP-related brochures, fact sheets and industry-specific inserts that provide information on the CV-SALT Initiative, the various strategies and policies of the SNMP and focused information on how the proposed Salt and Nitrate Control Program may affect specific industries. These fact sheets can be found here:

<https://www.cvsalinity.org/committees/public-education-and-outreach.html>.

In 2017, PEOC members gave over **45** outreach presentations to a variety of audiences, including Agricultural Groups, Food Processor Groups, Manufacturing Groups, Public Owned Treatment Works (POTW) Groups, Oil and Gas Organizations and Dairy Groups.

Disadvantaged Community and Local Group Outreach Grant

A Cleanup and Abatement grant from the State Water Resources Control Board was awarded in late 2017 to the Environmental Justice Group, the Community Water Center (CWC), to conduct outreach with disadvantaged communities and local groups to discuss CV-SALTS efforts related to provision of safe drinking water and opportunities for partnering on community projects. CWC has developed outreach material and is scheduling meetings with community groups, county representatives, and Groundwater Sustainability Agencies.

