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Central Valley Pesticide Basin Plan Amendment April 2007 Project Status Update

Overall Project Status Update

The focus of the Central Valley Pesticide Basin Plan Amendment is currently on generating the technical information necessary to develop appropriate water quality objectives and policies. Major efforts are in evaluating the appropriate aquatic life uses for the streams to which the objectives may apply; identifying the pesticides on which to focus; updating our techniques for deriving water quality criteria; and filling monitoring data gaps. More limited efforts have been made to evaluate available approaches to deriving sediment quality criteria. Future efforts include compiling and analyzing available pesticide water quality data and updating our report on available management practices. Background information and available documents related to this project are available on the project website at

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/programs/tmdl/pest-basinplan-amend/index.html>

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Aquatic Life Use Assessment

Staff is currently preparing a report that identifies natural streams within the project area that support aquatic life. In order to assess the presence of aquatic life, staff is using existing bioassessment data rather than conducting our own bioassessment monitoring. A draft aquatic life use assessment report is expected to be released for public review by June 2007.

Contact – Petra Lee (916) 464-4603; plee@waterboards.ca.gov

Pesticide Risk Evaluation

A revised draft pesticide risk evaluation for the Sacramento Valley was made available for public review and comment in February 2006. Staff is now working on a revised and expanded pesticide risk evaluation that will cover the Lower Sacramento and San Joaquin River Watersheds as well as the Delta and that will address both agricultural and non-agricultural pesticide uses. An internal draft of the revised, expanded pesticide risk evaluation report has been prepared. Release for public review is expected in June 2007.

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Water Quality Criteria

Water Quality Criteria and methodologies are currently being developed under contract by researchers at the Environmental Toxicology Department of the University of California, Davis. Progress on the three phases of the UC Davis contract is described below.

Phase I - Review of Existing Methodologies Used to Derive Water Quality Criteria

A draft Phase I report was released to the public in April 2006. This report reviewed water quality criteria derivation methods from around the world. The report evaluated strengths and weaknesses of each existing method, but did not find any single method that included all of the Central Valley Water Board's desired features.

Phase II - Identification of an Existing Method(s) or Development of a New Method

A draft criteria derivation methodology report has been completed. Comments have been received from the peer reviewers, responses were prepared, and changes were made to the methodology. The peer-reviewed report was released for public comment in February 2007. Written comments are due to the Central Valley Water Board by 18 May 2007.

Phase III - Application of the new method to Diazinon, Chlorpyrifos and Additional Pesticides

Draft diazinon criteria are in development and chlorpyrifos criteria have been drafted. The draft chlorpyrifos criteria were released with the Phase II report. Comments are due on 18 May 2007. The research team at U.C. Davis has changed. Ron Tjeerdema, Chair of the UC Davis Environmental Toxicology Department will continue on as the Principal Investigator with assistance from Inge Werner of the Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory and graduate students from the lab and Environmental Toxicology Department. Additional funding has been provided to U.C. Davis to derive 3-5 additional pesticide criteria.

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Water Quality Monitoring

The monitoring and quality assurance plan for the 2006 monitoring is available at on the Central Valley Pesticide Basin Plan Amendment website. Reports on the 2006 dormant season sampling (January-March) and a report on the 2006 irrigation season (March-August) are also available. Dormant season monitoring was not conducted in 2007 due to contracting difficulties. However, irrigation season monitoring will take place. The 2006 monitoring plan and quality assurance plan will be updated for 2007 and should be available in May 2007.

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Sediment Quality Criteria

Staff has begun to review available sediment criteria methodologies, and has been tracking the State Water Board's progress in developing Sediment Quality Objectives for California Bays and Estuaries, including the Delta.

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Source Assessment and Loading Capacity Analysis

This analysis will be conducted after completion of the pesticide risk evaluation.

Management Practice Alternatives

Based on the pesticide risk evaluation, the Regional Water Board's staff report on management practices to reduce pesticide runoff will be reviewed and potentially updated to reflect any new information on management practices. Funding is available through our master contract with U.C. Davis to update the report. However, the researchers who will conduct the work have not been identified.