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Central Valley Pesticide TMDL and Basin Plan Amendment November 2009 Project Status Update

Overall Project Status

The technical reports necessary to support the development of the Central Valley Pesticide TMDL and Basin Plan Amendment (Amendment) are all either complete or very near completion. Therefore, the focus of this project is shifting to development of the proposed Basin Plan Amendment and accompanying Staff Report which are scheduled to be brought to the Regional Board for potential adoption in June 2010. A public review draft Staff Report is scheduled to be released to the public in early 2010. The proposed Amendment will contain water quality objectives for pesticides in surface water in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins, as well as implementation provisions. The Amendment will contain total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for applicable waterbody segment/pesticide combinations and will address, at a minimum, diazinon and chlorpyrifos. Provisions for additional specific pesticides and consideration of sediment quality criteria will likely be accomplished in subsequent Basin Plan Amendments.

Public meetings were held in April and July 2009 to discuss overall project status and stakeholder comments on several aspects of the project, including the water quality criteria derivation methodology and its application, the pesticide relative risk evaluation, and the list of waterbodies which could potentially be included in the scope of the Basin Plan Amendment,

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Selected Water Bodies and Aquatic Life Uses Report

A public review draft aquatic life use assessment report was released in 2007. Additionally, a revised list of waterbodies was distributed for comment in August 2009. Staff are currently finalizing the report, including the list of waterbodies, and responding to public comments. A final report, including a list of waterbodies recommended for inclusion in the scope of this Amendment, and the Response to Comments, is anticipated in December 2009.

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Pesticide Risk Evaluation Report

A final report was released in March 2009. The report identifies 38 current-use pesticides which, based on their use, chemical properties, and toxicities, have higher potential risk to aquatic life in surface waters.

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Pesticide Water Quality Criteria

A “Phase 1” report containing a review of existing methodologies for determining aquatic life water quality criteria for pesticides was released in April 2006. A public review draft of the “Phase 2” report containing a new water quality criteria derivation methodology, and an example of its application (derivation of chlorpyrifos water quality criteria), was released in 2007. A final “Phase 2” report and response to comments was released in September 2009, along with a statement from Regional Board staff clarifying the meaning of the criteria produced using the criteria derivation methodology.

The water quality derivation project is now in “Phase 3”, where the methodology will be applied to derive water quality criteria for the organophosphorous pesticides diazinon and malathion, the herbicide diuron, and the pyrethroids bifenthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin and cyfluthrin. Application of the criteria derivation methodology will result in pesticide criteria that the Regional Board can consider, along with other available criteria, for interpretation of narrative objectives and/or adoption as water quality objectives through Basin Plan Amendments. Criteria for all these pesticides are expected to be released for public review and comment before they are finalized. Draft diuron criteria were released for public review and comment on 5 November 2009. Draft diazinon and malathion criteria are scheduled to be released in November 2009. Draft and final criteria documents for the remaining pesticides are expected to be released over the next few months.

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Agricultural Management Practices Report

The Regional Board has contracted with UC Davis researchers to prepare a report on available management practices to reduce agricultural pesticide runoff, including an evaluation on their costs and effectiveness. The report is expected to be completed in early 2010.

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Basin Plan Amendment Staff Report

Regional Water Board staff have begun drafting a staff report which will contain the analysis in support of a proposed Basin Plan Amendment for chlorpyrifos and diazinon. The report is expected to be similar to previous Basin Plan Amendment Staff Reports for pesticides, and will include proposed changes to the Basin Plan, an analysis of sources, potential water quality objectives, programs of implementation for achieving water quality objectives (including TMDL requirements), and an analysis of costs of the amendment.

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