



Enforcement News

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
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Central Valley Water Board Settles With 2 Southern San Joaquin Valley Growers For Failure to Acquire Water Quality Permits

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Contact: Brett Stevens
Phone: (916) 464-4642

SACRAMENTO -- The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has approved a pair of settlement agreements -- one for a Kern County landowner and another for a Madera County landowner -- for failure to obtain the required permits for discharging waste from irrigated croplands.

The settlement agreements will fine David Ross and Renae Braaksma-Ross \$42,900, and M.C. Land Company \$46,000 for unpermitted activities on their properties in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

State law requires water quality permits for commercial irrigated lands because pesticides and fertilizers used on cropland can run off into streams, or enter groundwater. These permits ensure waste discharges don't harm the Central Valley's rivers and groundwater aquifers.

In 2012 and 2013, the Central Valley Water Board issued waste discharge requirements that allowed farmers in the Southern San Joaquin Valley to join coalitions of growers, including the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and the Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority. The coalitions hold water quality permits that cover their members, conduct monitoring and provide reports to the Central Valley Water Board on behalf of the growers.

Property owners who don't join a coalition incur much higher costs conducting their own individual monitoring and reporting to the Central Valley Water Board. Growers whose parcels do not have the required permit are subject to fines and may lose their opportunity to be regulated under the coalition-based permit.

"Owners of unpermitted irrigated lands are undermining the regulatory program and efforts to mitigate agricultural-related water quality problems. With these fines, the Board is sending a strong message that it's time for the remaining non-permitted growers to obtain all appropriate regulatory coverage," said Andrew Altevogt, assistant executive officer for the Central Valley Water Board.



For more information on these enforcement actions, see the [Braaksma-Ross](#) and [M.C. Lands](#) settlement agreements.

Owners of irrigated cropland can find out how to join a coalition group and get the required regulatory coverage by going to the [Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program “Join a Coalition Group” webpage](#), or by calling the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program at (916) 464-4611. More information about these fines can be found at the [Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Outreach and Enforcement webpage](#).

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